

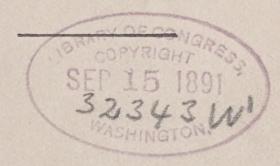


IN ONE GIRL'S EXPERIENCE.

MARY HUBBARD HOWELL.

Author of "Through the Winter," "In Safe Hands," "Out of the Shadow," "Along the Old Road," "On the Way Home," "In After Years."

The Lord is my strength and my shield .- Bible.



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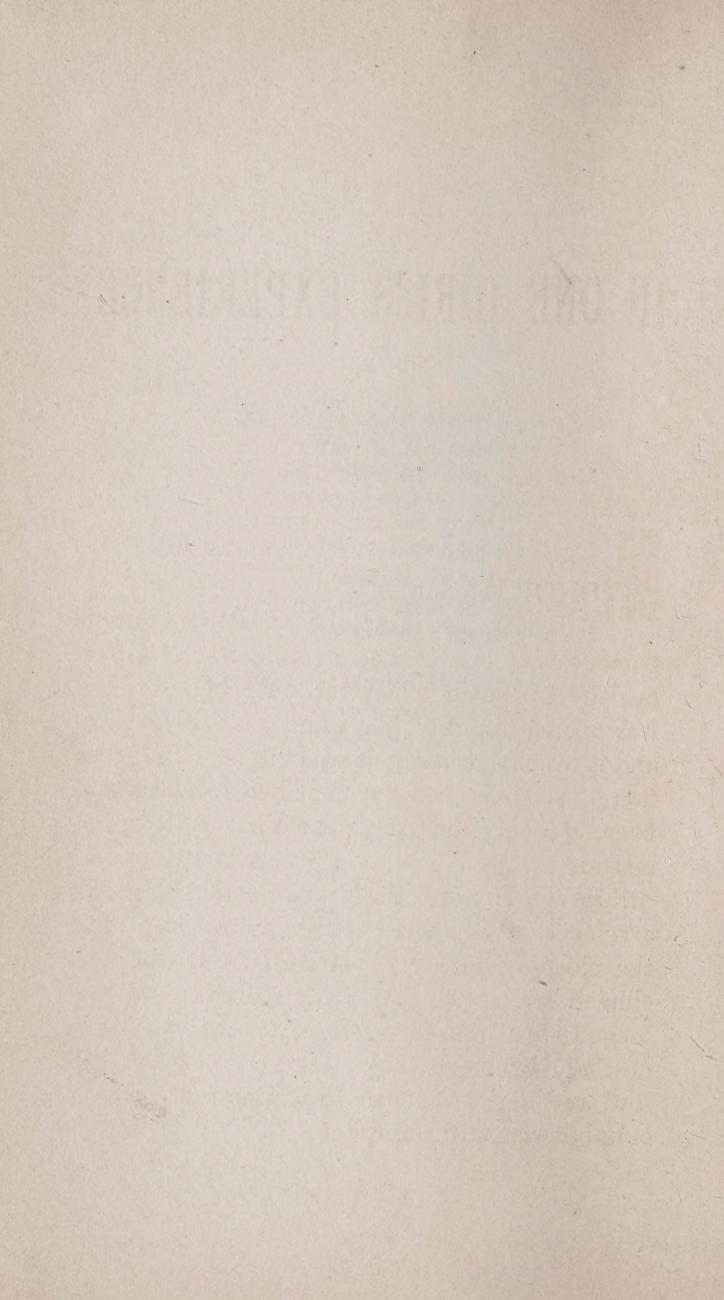
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"Through poverty that had no lack,
For friends divinely good;
Through pain that not too long did rack
Through love that understood;

Through light that taught me what to hold,
And what to cast away;
Through thy forgiveness manifold,
And things I cannot say.

Here thou hast brought me—able now
To kiss thy garment's hem,
Entirely to thy will to bow,
And trust thee to the end."

-Geo. Macdonald.



IN ONE GIRL'S EXPERIENCE.

CHAPTER I.

LEFT ALONE.

"Many make the household, But only one the home."

—Lowell.

"HONOR, Honor!"

It was just midnight, and Honor Montgomery was lost in the deep, sweet sleep of healthy girlhood, when the door of her room was opened quickly, her name was called twice, and a woman, whose worsted slippers and loose flannel wrapper showed that her own rest had been suddenly disturbed, came hurriedly to her bedside.

"Honor, Honor," the woman called again, in a voice that was shrill as well as troubled; but the sleeping girl only smiled, as if the call chimed well with her happy dreams. For a second she moved restlessly; but then she nestled her bright head deeper in her soft pillow, and her low, gentle breathing told that her slumber was still unbroken. With sober eyes the woman watched her for a moment. "I do declare, it's a shame to wake her up to trouble," she said, regretfully, to herself; "but I suppose it can't be helped; the dying can't wait, and she's got to know." And laying her hand on the girl's uncovered arm, she called for the third time, "Honor, Honor, do wake up."

At that last call Honor opened her eyes, and starting up in bed, looked anxiously about her. "What is the matter?" she asked as she saw the woman. "What do you want, Miss Clark?"

." I want you to get up an' dress," Miss Clark answered, firmly. "Your father is took sick."

Honor was still too bewildered to do more than sit up in her bed and stare at Miss Clark. "Sick? Is he very sick?" she asked in a slow, dull voice.

"Well, maybe he isn't, and then again maybe he is," Miss Clark answered, oracularly. While she was speaking she lighted Honor's lamp, and when that was done, she walked to the door; but there, with her hand on the knob, she stopped and looked with some impatience as well as anxiety at Honor, who was still in bed. "Come, ain't you goin' to get up?" she asked sharply.

Honor sprang out of bed, but then she stood still, and looked helplessly at Miss Clark.

"I don't understand it," she said, in a perplexed voice. "Father was well when I came to bed; what is the matter with him now, Miss Clark?"

"I don't know as I can tell you. I ain't no doctor, and I don't care to say what I think; and if I did say it, it wouldn't make no difference, for opinions ain't of no sort of consequence in such cases," Miss Clark answered soberly. "But," she added as she opened the door, "this ain't no time for talkin'. I left the doctor with your father, and you had better come quick."

There was no need of that last word, for Honor was fully aroused now, and painfully conscious that her father was very ill. With nervous haste she slipped on her wrapper, and when Miss Clark—after stepping in her usual deliberate manner down the stairs and across the hall—turned the knob of the sitting-room door, the girl stood beside her.

"Well, you have been quick," Miss Clark whispered, approvingly. "Now"—as they crossed the room to the sick man's door—"don't you be frightened."

Honor's only answer was a pitiful little shake of her head; but when she saw her father's face—already pallid and drawn with pain all nervous fears and thoughts of self were forgotten in the one great and absorbing desire to do something to relieve him. And through that long night of agony she worked as only one who struggles for a dear one's life can work.

Slowly the darkness wore away; with the gray of the morning there came over the sick man's face a solemn change. The doctor saw it, and while he felt his patient's pulse, looked pitifully at Honor. Miss Clark saw it, and drew nearer to the side of the trembling girl, with a tender longing to strengthen her for the sorrow no human power could avert.

There was no pain now, but only extreme weakness, as with each new moment the sick man drew nearer the brink of that river whose tide is always flowing out.

"Is it morning?" he asked feebly. "Draw back the curtain; let me see the light."

Back from an east window Honor drew the curtain. Already the morning sky was flushed with the promise of the sunrise, and in the air there was the strange soft stir, that comes so often with the early dawn. All around there were signs of opening day. From a tree, near the window, there came a low sweet piping from a nest full of young just awakened birds; over the hard road Honor could hear a milk-man's cart rattling on its way to the station;

and from the chimney across the street a wreath of blue smoke was curling lazily upward. Yes, the day was breaking, and even then the world was all astir with life and activity. But in that quiet chamber—as in how many others throughout the wide world—there was one who was looking upon it all for the last time; and who was fast going from the hurry and labor that we call living to the rest that the angels know is life.

Slowly from the window, with its fair fresh outlook, the dying eyes wandered to the bright young head bowed near them on the pillow. Feebly the weak hand moved until it rested on the soft hair.

"My little Honor," the faint voice said tenderly, "look up, and listen to me. The hardest part of dying is leaving you here alone. I would stay and take care of you if I could—I never thought of such a sudden call. Things are not as I would like to leave them—There are debts that must be paid—I am afraid there will not be much left for you—If I had known—oh, if I had only known "—As if touched by some painful memory the weak voice faltered for a moment.

With a tender desire to give comfort, Miss Clark spoke. "Don't feel bad about Honor, she'll be cared for," she said, gently.

A light that was more beautiful than a smile illumined the dying man's face. "I know," he murmured softly—"I know, God has promised to be a Father to the fatherless, and his promises are sure. Be a good girl, my darling, and trust in him—He will take care of you—I leave you—in—his hands. Ask him—to help—you."

Slowly, at intervals, came the last words. The feeble breath grew fainter and fainter; the hand, that still rested on the young head, grew nerveless and chill.

"It is over," the doctor said gravely.

Honor raised her head; and as she looked at her father, and, for the first time in her life, saw in his face no answering look of love for her his only child, she felt in all its bitterness the truth that she was left alone, an orphan in a world where there were few to share her grief, and fewer still, bound to her by the strong ties of family and blood, to give her sympathy and aid in the unknown future that lay before her.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT NEXT?

"Better to trust in God than say
My goods my storehouse fill."

—George Macdonald.

IT was the twilight of a fair June day, one week after the sad night when Honor had awakened from her happy dreams to face the sharp realities of suffering and death. The work of the day was over, but Miss Clark and the young girl still lingered in the neat kitchen of the old farm-house.

"Let's stay here," Miss Clark said when Honor proposed going into the sitting-room. "When there's trouble in a house, I do believe the kitchen is the cheerfulest place to be in. You see, Honor, work seems, some how, to keep rooms bright as well as hearts."

"All rooms are alike to me," Honor said in a despondent voice.

Miss Clark did not answer; with her usual composure she seated herself in the chintz-cushioned rocking-chair, that had stood for years in a corner of the kitchen, and with a

mournful sigh Honor sat down on a low bench near her. The lamp stood on the table, but they did not care to light it; and in the deepening dusk with folded hands, but busy and troubled minds they sat together. Both were conscious that there was much they ought to consider and talk over, and each was dreading to be the first to speak.

Presently, with a long-drawn breath, Miss Clark broke the oppressive silence: "Well," she ejaculated slowly, "things have come to a sudden end sure enough. Really, I don't know as it would have surprised me much more if the world itself had come to an end. Just think, Honor, I've been housekeeper for your father an' you ever since your mother died, and that was ten years ago, when you were a little girl only eight years old. I'd got used to living here, the things and me some how seemed to belong together; an' I felt comfortably settled for the rest of my life. And now it seems just as if there'd been an earthquake; all my expectations are so completely upset. It is very strange how little common sense some folks, an' sensible folks, too, show in the management of their own affairs. Now, here's your father's case, Honor. He was honest an' industrious; he worked hard all his life, and the neighbors always supposed he was pretty well

off. But now they say there is scarcely a dollar left for you. Lawyer Graham says the farm is mortgaged for more than it will sell for, an' this old house and all that's of any value in it has got to go under the hammer; and even when everything is sold there won't be money enough to pay the debts."

As Miss Clark continued to recount her troubles her voice grew quicker; and now with unusual energy she exclaimed: "I do declare, I do think it is a sin and a shame for men to run in debt for things they haven't the money to pay for. There ought to be a law forbidding it; an' I don't believe but there will be in the millennium. But dear me "-and once more Miss Clark's voice grew very doleful-"the millennium is too far off to do you an' me any good, Honor. The mischief is done so far as we are concerned. We can't call this old house home much longer. We'll have to separate, I suppose, and I'll just have to pack my trunk and move elsewhere. Well, I do hope the old hymn is true when it tells us, that there is rest for the weary on the other side of Jordan, for I am sure there ain't much rest on this side that the weary can depend on."

Busy with her own sad thoughts Honor had not paid much attention to Miss Clark's long preamble; but now, as the good woman paused for breath, the young girl asked, "Where are you going?"

"I don't know," Miss Clark replied quickly, "that is, I haven't quite decided. You see, Honor, when one's plans are all upset an' knocked over, it ain't as easy to make new ones, as it is for children to build up their block houses after a fall. Still I am beginning to see my way. I've written to my cousin out in Illinois. She's a widow, an' pretty comfortably settled on a farm, an' I shouldn't be at all surprised if I went to her;—for a spell at any rate. I guess she'll think it worth her while to invite me, for she knows I've got a bank book, and have been piecing bed quilts, an' laying up nice things all these years I've been housekeeping here; and Sabrina is like most folks-she cares more for them that's full handed, than she does for them whose hands are empty. But la, that's the way of the world, and I don't lay it up against her; in fact, I b'lieve I'm glad it is so, for it makes me feel certain that, if I make up my mind to knock at her door, she will be more than ready to take me in."

As Miss Clark ended her long explanation she smoothed an imaginary wrinkle out of her apron, and looked well-satisfied with herself and her prospects.

"You have been very kind to me, and I hope

you will be happy and comfortable wherever you may go," Honor said, gratefully.

"I shall try to be; for I never could see any merit in being uncomfortable when it wasn't necessary," Miss Clark answered with decision. "But still," she continued, thoughtfully, "I ain't at all sure that I am going to fall into a bed of feathers, Honor. Changes are pretty apt, like a good many folk's marriages, to be made for the worse instead of for the better. An' going among strangers, even when they are relations, is a good deal like going chestnuting; it is always safe to count on a good many pricks. However, I've learned to take good care of myself, and I have no fears but what, somehow or other, I'll get along. But, Honor," and now Miss Clark's complacent voice was touched with sincere anxiety, "I am more worried about you than I am about myself. You ain't never had to fight with the world, as I have had to. You have been took care of all your life, an' kinder kept-like the china tea-set on the high shelf in the closet—as if you were a little bit too good for every-day use. Now your troubles are just beginning; an' when things are settled here, an' I am gone, the great question is, What will you do next?"

How often, oh, how often, in this strange life of ours, when our hearts are still half-stunned from some crushing blow, are we confronted with this stern, must-be-answered question: What will you do next? And how often are we forced sadly and almost hopelessly to answer, as Honor did now,

"I don't know."

"Hum," Miss Clark said, after a moment's consideration of Honor's unsatisfactory answer, "that's just what I supposed you would say, Honor. But if ignorance is ever bliss it ain't in your case, and now just let me tell you, that you have got to find out what you are going to do, an' that pretty soon too. Business, like time, most always seems to be in a hurry, and in your case it isn't very likely to loiter. That large mortgage, you know, is in Squire Skinner's hands; and he ain't the man to move slow when there are dollars to pick up. It is his creed that he helps other folks most by helping himself first; so you needn't expect any consideration from him, Honor."

"I don't," Honor said shortly.

"Well, it's just as well, if you don't," Miss Clark replied, with a wise nod of her head. "Them that expects nothing, won't never be disappointed when they are dealing with a Squire Skinner. Still, I must say, it does seem pretty hard to be turned out of one's home in this way, an' I am very sorry for you, Honor.

But, dear me," the kind-hearted woman continued, as she brushed away what looked suspiciously like a tear, "it ain't no use to complain, for you can't control circumstances, when other folks have got the managing of them, no more than you can runaway horses. But there's one comfort, Honor, you've got a good education. Your father spent a heap of money on your schooling. I used to think, sometimes, that paying boardin'-school bills was a pretty poor investment for his hard-earned dollars; but maybe the time has come when the investment will pay good interest. I'm sure I hope so. I suppose you can teach school now, Honor, can't you?"

"I don't know," Honor answered in a dreamy tone, as if she felt little personal interest in the question, "it never has seemed to me that I would like to teach."

"Dear me, child," Miss Clark exclaimed impatiently, "you don't seem to have no more understanding of what I am saying than if you was living in dreamland. Do wake up, and try to understand your situation. It isn't any question now of what you would like to do, Honor, it is what you can do, and must do, that you have got to consider, an' that without any loss of time. There ain't, to my certain knowledge, more than twenty-five dollars belonging

to you in this house to-night, an' there ain't no bank that you can draw more from; an' so, Honor, you see you will have to earn your daily bread by your daily work; and I wish you would tell me what work you are going to do."

"How can I tell you when I don't know myself," Honor said, helplessly. "There are a great many women in the world who support themselves, and what they do, I suppose I can do; but I cannot say to-night what particular work I will do. I must think before I decide."

"Well," Miss Clark said, as she left her chair, took a match from the safe on the mantel, and proceeded to light the lamp, "I hope you will think to some purpose, Honor, but it has always been my opinion, that it is doing, more than thinking, that keeps the pocket-book well filled."

Honor gave a little impatient exclamation, but Miss Clark did not heed it. "Honor," she said, as she resumed her seat and looked soberly at the girl, "I have had more experience in this knock-about world than you have had, an' now I shan't never feel satisfied that I've done my duty by you, if I don't give you a little good advice. If you are going to be an independent an' self-supporting woman, you've just got to stop day-dreaming, and building air castles. You always have been a master-hand

at that kind of work you know, Honor, but you might just as reasonably expect to find the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow, as to expect that real work will come to you, if you just sit and dream about it, an' don't try to find it."

Honor gave a weary sigh, but Miss Clark went mercilessly on.

"You must be right resolute too, with your-self, Honor, and take the first respectable work that offers, without stopping to consider whether the chances are in favor of your liking or not liking to do it. In fact, Honor, the chances are that you won't like to do it. We have all got so much lazy blood in us, that real work of any kind always seems hard, especially at first. But that don't make any difference, except, perhaps, that it makes life a little harder for us; if we are poor we must work; for the world ain't so much obliged to any of us for living, that it owes us a support we don't labor for."

"I don't want the world to support me,"

Honor broke in, indignantly.

"Well, it ain't going to," Miss Clark said consolingly. She waited a few moments to let Honor take the full comfort of her last assurance, and then she began again.

"Honor," she said, "I don't know as you've got a relation in the world that can help you

now, have you?"

"Not that I know of," Honor acknowledged sadly.

"I know you ain't," Miss Clark said positively. "You see, Honor, your mother was an only child—it's a dreadful pity to be an only child I think—and your father—" Miss Clark hesitated. "Well, I ain't sure," she said in a moment, "but I suppose he was an only, too. After all, Honor," she went on—Miss Clark, like Tennyson's brook, had a happy faculty for going on—"I don't know as your not having relations makes any matter. Folks that count on their rich relations helping them, are just as foolish as those other folks who count their chickens afore they are hatched. In either case, it is my opinion, that the expectations will always be bigger than the receipts."

Honor moved impatiently. "Please don't talk any longer about my relations and expectations, Miss Clark," she said, fretfully. "I have told you that I have neither."

"Well, if you really do realize that you haven't I have accomplished something," Miss Clark said cheerfully. "You see, Honor, I want to impress it upon you that you have got to depend upon yourself. You have always lived in a queer sort of world, made up of dreams and story books. You never have had to think about unpleasant things, and your father would

as soon have let fire touch you as trouble. I do believe that the hardest question you have had to answer since you left school has been what kind of cloth you would have for a dress, and how you would have it made? But now everything is changed. You can no longer sit still and eat cake that somebody else has earned for you; in fact, Honor, I believe it is my duty to warn you that, in all probability, you won't have much cake; but you must have bread, and the question is, how are you goin' to get it? And that is a hard question, child, and one it will take all your smartness, and education, too, to answer."

Honor could bear no more; rising suddenly she opened the outside door, and closing it behind her sat down on the doorstep.

It was a still, moonlight Summer night. The warm wind was heavy with the fragrance of roses and syringas, and insects hummed drowsily in the shrubbery. There seemed no want and no sorrow in that peaceful out-door world; but Honor's poor heart was burdened with cares and fears, and the beauty of that quiet evening served only to deepen her sadness.

She was just eighteen, a healthy girl, and a graduate of a young ladies' seminary. She was also pretty, with a grace and attractiveness of

manner that pleased all who came within her influence. Now, with these gifts and qualifications, she was to go forth, somewhere, into the wide world, and, as Miss Clark had so plainly told her, earn by her daily toil her daily bread.

What was she going to do?

As she had told Miss Clark: she did not know.

What was she capable of doing?

That question, unfortunately, had to receive the same answer: she did not know.

Her mother had died when she was very young, and her father's chief anxiety in life had been to shield her, his only child, from all annoyances and hardships. She had made sunshine for him in his lonely home, but no work of any kind ever had been required of her. She could sweep and dust the parlor, arrange flowers beautifully, and loop curtains gracefully; but of all the homely and useful kinds of work, that are so essential to the comfort of every-day life, she had little experimental knowledge. She was, in truth, too ignorant to be able either to manage servants well or to make a good servant herself, had she felt obliged to become one.

Her fingers almost blushed at their helplessness as she tried, that night, to think of some one thing she really could do well. She could sew; but even in that acknowledged realm of woman's work, she felt that, if she would be truthful, she must add the limiting phrase, a little; for it was a very simple and plain piece of sewing that she could do, from its beginning to its end, and finish beautifully.

But Miss Clark had said, "You have a good education."

Had she?

For four years, at a great outlay of money, and by the exercise of rigid self-denial, her father had kept her at an expensive boarding-school; and laid carefully away in her desk, with a few withered flowers was a diploma, daintily tied with white ribbon, certifying that she had completed the required course of study, and was a graduate.

What now, in her hour of need, could that white-ribboned diploma do for her?

Very little, as in deep humiliation Honor confessed to herself. She had a smattering, and a superficial knowledge of many studies; but she knew nothing thoroughly. She understood enough of many subjects to be able, perhaps, to appreciate the attainments of others wiser than herself; but she did not understand one of those subjects well enough to be able to explain it, plainly and intelligently, to those

more ignorant than herself. She never had expected to teach; and when her lessons were hard and uninteresting she had contented herself with just skimming over them. She had not intended to do wrong, or abuse her advantages, but it had not seemed to her at all necessary that she should be faithful in the performance of all the duties her teachers laid upon her.

Very regretfully, that Summer night, the poor girl thought of the half-learned lessons, the dreamed-away hours, and the wasted opportunities of her school days. And this solemn truth was impressed forever upon her mind—that in God's plan for us there is no room for waste. The fragments are all to be gathered up; and if advantages are neglected, opportunities thrown carelessly away, time idled away, when it should be usefully employed, and strength squandered in trifles, there will surely come a sorrowful day, when, with unavailing regrets, we will long for the privileges we once despised, and find that, like the birds flown from their nests, they will return to us no more.

On the very threshold of her life, Honor felt helpless and discouraged; and the rebellious thought stole into her mind that her burdens were too heavy for her to bear alone, and death itself would be better than the long and toilsome years that seemed to lie before her. But her nature was too sweet and hopeful, willingly to indulge such morbid fancies long; and soon, with the memory of her father, came the memory of his last solemn words, "I leave you in God's hands."

Was she really there, in God's strong, tender, and protecting hands? Honor started at that thought. There was a reality and a depth of meaning in it she had never felt before. She tried to think of other things, but still that earnest question pressed for an answer: Did she believe she was in God's hands, did she want to be in them? Did she want,—for this seemed to her the true meaning of those words,—did she want God's will to be done in her life; did she want to do that will?

For a long time Honor sat that Summer night, under the stars, on the old porch, and pondered those solemn questions.

She had been brought up carefully in a Christian home, where the Bible had been reverenced, and its teachings unquestioningly believed; but Honor had never thought herself a Christian. Now one of the decisive moments, that come to every soul, had come to her. Before she went on, to meet the changes of the unknown future, she felt that night that she must answer truthfully two solemn questions.

Did she, or rather,—for she knew it was more her will than her intellect that had to answer,—would she believe in, and accept her Bible as God's revealed law for the guidance of her life? and would she believe in, and trust herself, with a child's confidence, to the God to whose care her father had committed her?

Alone in the starry silence Honor considered those questions; at last, in a slow, firm voice, as if she were speaking to someone near her though unseen, she said aloud:

"Yes, I do believe in, and I will trust my father's God. Poor and friendless, with no one to counsel or to guide me, I give myself to the Lord. I will learn the lessons he sets me; I will do the work he sends me; I will obey the commands he lays upon me."

The solemn deed was done. Kneeling there by the old door-step, with only the stars for watchers, Honor placed herself, where her father had left her, in God's care. And though there came, at the moment, no sudden light upon her path, nor any voice to tell her what her next step should be, there did come into her heart a sense of peace and safety, such as only comes to the child who clings to the Father's hand, and rests in his protecting love.

CHAPTER III.

PEN AND PAPER.

"What though we fail indeed,
You—I—a score of such weak workers,
God fails never."

-Mrs. Browning.

TRUE to a plan she formed that night, Honor went the next day to ask the advice of one of her father's oldest and most trusted friends. She felt great confidence in his judgment, for she had heard her father call him a deep thinker. But it is one thing to speculate intellectually about life's problems, and it is quite another thing to give sound, practical counsel to one individual life. Mr. Raymond listened kindly to Honor's sad story, and then said:

"Think over your talents, my dear, and choose the work for which you feel best adapted. Faithful labor, in the direction of our talents, will commonly insure success."

The advice sounded good, and that it did not touch on matter-of-fact realities made it the more attractive to Honor. She went home, passed a sleepless night trying to decide what her talents

were, and the next morning, when she joined Miss Clark at the breakfast table, she seemed dreamy and preoccupied.

Miss Clark watched her for a few moments, and then asked sharply: "What is the matter with you, Honor?"

"Oh nothing," Honor answered, "only,— I've thought of a plan, Miss Clark."

"You really have, have you? Well, I do hope it's a plan that will work. A good many plans seem to me just like engines without steam. They look as if they could carry you anywhere, but, when you try 'em, you find that something is lacking, an' so they just stand still. Where is your plan going to carry you, hey?" and as she spoke, Miss Clark sat back in her chair and waited, with a good deal of curiosity, for Honor's answer.

"It won't take me far away, at least not immediately," Honor slowly explained. "It is something I am going to do in my room, Miss Clark. You won't mind if you don't see much of me for two or three days, will you? I shall be very busy, and I don't want any interruptions."

"Well, I am just as puzzled, Honor, as if you had asked me to guess a riddle. I am sure you ain't going to sew, for you ain't much more

knack with your needle, than a baby has with a hammer, an' what you are going to do I confess I can't imagine. You ain't going to tear up the floor in hopes you'll find gold under it, are you?"

"No, but I am going to do something that I hope will bring me gold, Miss Clark. I am going," and now Honor spoke very slowly, and as if she felt deeply impressed herself with the seriousness of her undertaking, "I am going—to try—to write."

"Good land of love," Miss Clark exclaimed.
"What do you mean, Honor? You don't mean that you are going to try to write a book, do you?"

"Something like it," Honor confessed, while her cheeks flushed under Miss Clark's curious gaze. "I shall begin with a short story or an essay, but if that succeeds then I hope the book will follow."

"Well, I always knew you weren't just like other girls," Miss Clark answered, "but I didn't know before that you had a book in your head. Now, Honor, I ain't very wise, an' I don't know much about book making, but I do believe it is my duty to tell you that I don't think your plan a very sensible one. I've seen a good many men try to whistle like the birds, and call 'em down within reach of their guns,

but I've never known but two or three men that could do it well; and just so I do suppose that there are a good many folks who try to write books, and hope to make money doing it, but I guess the most of 'em are like the men who try to call the birds—they find they can't do it—suc—cess—ful—ly."

With a shake of her head that gave emphasis to her last slowly spoken word, Miss Clark, satisfied now that she had done her duty, turned her attention to the breakfast, Honor's "plan" had made her forget, and proceeded to pour the coffee. But though the coffee was clear as amber, and looked very tempting in her delicate china cup, Honor cared little for it; and just as little did she care for Miss Clark's arguments against her ambitious scheme. It had occurred to her during the night while she was acting on Mr. Raymond's advice, and "thinking over her talents." Suddenly,-like an inspiration, as she said hopefully to herselfcame the suggestion, why couldn't she become an author? Always when at school it had been an easy task for her to write compositions, and her teachers and schoolmates had been generous in their praise of her efforts. If she had any talent Honor decided that it must be a talent for writing. And now, in this her hour of need, why shouldn't she use

her talent and write for newspapers and magazines?

There really was no good reason why she should not, provided she could; and Honor, like many another who stands before an unattempted task, was confident that she could. Her face flushed and her heart beat fast as she thought over her plan. It seemed such a delightful way out of all her difficulties; "For of course," she argued in her simplicity, "authors never failed to make both money and friends." Before it was time to rise that early Summer morning Honor had planned a novel with the comprehensive title, "The Puzzles All Solved." But after a good deal of deliberation she decided that her first literary effort should be an essay. It seemed more in the line of the compositions she had been accustomed to write when at school; it would not require quite as much planning and literary carpenter work as a story, in which the incidents and characters must all be made to match and dovetail into each other, and then-and this was a strong argument in its favor—an essay would be much shorter than a serial story. She surely could write one in a day or two, and perhaps (for her dreams were sanguine as well as aspiring) in a week's time the editor who was so fortunate as to receive her manuscript would write her a kind letter, enclosing a liberal check, and would modestly state that a column in his paper would always be open to her contributions.

Ah, Honor built a beautiful palace out of her day-dreams that morning; but only those who have never dreamed and never failed could bear to laugh at her.

Her faith in the success of her attempt was perfect, and as soon as she could, she began her pleasant task. A line in the "Bigelow Papers," "O, ef we hed only jest got recognition," furnished her with both title and motto for her essay, and with a brave determination to deserve and win "recognition" for herself as an author, she brought out her paper, and sharpened her lead-pencils.

All that day she spent in her room, and at sunset four sheets of commercial note paper, closely written in lead-pencil, lay on her desk.

"Is it done yet?" Miss Clark asked that evening, while she was wiping the tea dishes.

"It?" Honor repeated absently, "oh, you mean my essay? No, but it will be to-morrow."

"And how much do you think you'll get for it?" Miss Clark asked, with her mind intent upon the practical result of Honor's great work.

"Well," Honor answered slowly, "you know I never have written for the press before, Miss

Clark, and so I don't know certainly how much I will get; but I have read that Mrs. Stowe used to get ten dollars a column when she wrote for the "Atlantic," and, at that rate, I think I ought to receive about fifty dollars."

Miss Clark dropped her tea-towel and looked at Honor in blank amazement for a moment.

"You don't really mean that writers make money as easy as that, do you?" she exclaimed. "Why, Honor, at that rate your brain will pay you almost as well as a California gold mine. Well, I must confess it is a pretty nice thing to have books in your head, and to be able to write them down on paper."

Honor smiled brightly. "I think it is my-self," she said so innocently, that even if Miss Clark thought her mistaken and conceited she was not hard-hearted enough to tell her so.

The next morning Honor began to copy her essay, and now a lion, she found it hard to conquer, stood in her way. It was one thing to jot down her thoughts with a lead-pencil, without any regard to rhetoric and grammar, and it was quite another thing to write every sentence out carefully, with each word well-chosen and in its proper place. She found now that a good many little details, that at first seemed to her of small consequence, were in reality

among the very foundation principles of good writing. She was often in doubt about the construction of her sentences, and although she supposed she knew her mother-tongue thoroughly, she found, on comparison, that her English had a very independent but not always satisfactory way of disagreeing with the English taught in Brown's grammar. Capitals and punctuation also puzzled her, but she said to herself consolingly:

"Genius is always recognized and admired, even if, sometimes, it does show a lack of familiarity with dictionaries and rhetorics."

And so, undaunted by her little discouragements, Honor persevered; and at the close of the third day the essay was copied, and she felt ready to submit it to the editor.

But what editor? Editors had always seemed to her as vague and impersonal as the public opinion they represented; but now she suddenly remembered that they were very real and important personages, and that, from among the large number who ruled over the papers and magazines of the country, she must now select one, and to him offer her article.

This imperative necessity, from which she could in no way escape, if she wished her essay published, caused Honor serious trouble. Presently what seemed to her a happy thought

relieved her perplexity. There was the Rev. R. S. Truman. His books were full of charity and kind feeling. Why not write to him, and inclose her essay, and ask his assistance? This thought no sooner occurred to Honor than she decided to act upon it. The sun was just setting, but in the bright June twilight she could still see well, and once more seizing her pen, in nervous haste and with a trembling hand she wrote:

Broadfields, N. Y., June 10th, 18-.

REV. R. S. TRUMAN,

DEAR SIR:—I am a young girl, an orphan, and without friends. I am obliged to support myself, and I am very anxious to become a writer. I have just finished a short essay that I hope is worth publishing; but I have no friends to criticise it, and I do not know where to send it. In my trouble and indecision I have thought of you. I fear I am very presumptuous, but I do need help very much, and if you will kindly read my manuscript, and—if you think it good enough to be published—advise me where to send it, I shall be very grateful. Please pardon me if I am asking too much.

Very respectfully yours,
HONOR THORN MONTGOMERY.

"Well?" Miss Clark said interrogatively, when a little later she met Honor in the hall dressed to go out.

"I am only going to the post-office," the young girl explained; and as she spoke she held

up the envelope containing her precious manuscript.

"Going to mail it, are you?" Miss Clark said, "and expect to get fifty dollars for it, do you? Well, go along. I suppose we all have to learn from experience that there ain't no truth in fairy stories."

Honor laughed. "You are a dear old croaker," she said gayly, as she ran out of the house, but if the fairy stories are not true, there are real stories that are far more wonderful than any imaginary ones—as I will prove to you some day."

"Hope you will," Miss Clark soliloquized, as she stood in the open door and watched Honor go down the street. "Yes, I certainly do hope you will. But I have always been firm about not believing stories until I have good proof they are true, and now I shan't count on that fifty dollars until I hold it in my hand, or see it in yours."

The next week was a very trying one for Honor. With feverish impatience she waited and watched for a letter from Dr. Truman, and the hopeful spirit in which she went each day to the post-office, was only equalled by the disappointed feeling with which she left it. One afternoon, when she was not very well, Miss Clark offered to go to the post-office for

her, and when she returned, though she said nothing, and seemed to take off her bonnet and shawl with unusual deliberation, Honor was sure that when she first came in she had caught a glimpse of a letter in her hand. She tried to ask, Have you anything for me? but her voice failed her, and she could only wait in silence until Miss Clark, having pinned up her shawl in a towel and laid it in her closet, was ready to sit down.

"Here, Honor," she said then, "I am dreadfully afraid you are going to be disappointed, and I do believe I had just about as soon lose money as give you these, but I suppose you've got to have 'em." And as Miss Clark spoke she laid two letters in Honor's lap.

With cheeks that flushed and then grew pale, and hands that trembled and felt strangely cold, Honor took them up. One was quite a thick letter; and even as she opened the envelope Honor realized what it was. Slowly she drew out the folded sheets; she did not need to open them she recognized them at once. The essay over which she had dreamed so happily was returned to her. There was a blur over her eyes for a few moments, and then she noticed a slip of thin paper folded inside her manuscript. With fingers that seemed to tingle with pain she unfolded it and read:

DEAR MADAM:—We are so crowded that we have no room for your article in our paper, and therefore return it with thanks.

Respectfully,

Editor of Age of Fiction.

Honor dropped the paper that had so pitilessly crushed her hopes, and then she buried her face in the pillow of the lounge on which she was sitting. She could not cry; she felt too hopeless for tears; the disappointment seemed utterly irretrievable. Never, through all her after life, did she recall that hour without feeling again that sting of bitter pain, humiliation, and disappointment. Minutes past, but she neither spoke nor moved. Presently Miss Clark, who with her keen eyes had watched and understood it all, spoke.

"Come, Honor," she said cheerfully, "don't feel so cast down. You ain't the first one that's failed, an' you won't be the last. I know you are disappointed, and I am sorry for you, but then perhaps it would have been worse for you in the end if you had succeeded now. I have been disappointed in a good many things in my life, and I've kinder come to feel that disappointments are a good deal like tonics—they are generally pretty bitter, and just because they are, they generally do you good. I know you wanted to write a book, but I suppose the Lord wants you to do something else—for a

while at least. Come, now, if I was you I'd just hearten up, an' read my other letter."

Her other letter! Honor had forgotten that she had another, but now she raised her head and took it up.

"Return to Rev. R. S. Truman if not delivered in ten days," she read on the envelope, and with a feeling of pity for herself she opened it and read:

MISS HONOR THORN MONTGOMERY.

DEAR MADAM:—I thank you for the confidence you have reposed in me. Yesterday I sent your manuscript to the editor of the Age of Fiction. He may accept it, but I am afraid it will not be true kindness for me to give you much encouragement. The world to-day is full of people, young and old, who wish to write, can write, and do write for the press; consequently editors have a wide field to glean in; they can choose between the good, the better, and the best, and naturally they like—and I am sure we cannot blame them—to take the best.

Study, experience, and practice are quite necessary for one who wishes to be a successful author. Essays—unless written with a diamond-pointed pen—are a little too much like dull days. People for the most part do not enjoy dull days, and they decline to buy dull essays. Short and good stories are always in demand. The most successful story writers are usually those who write of real life as they have seen and known it. I would advise you to write of something you have yourself observed or experienced, and while I am advising let me say one word more. Young writers are apt to quote freely; but borrowed thoughts, no matter how good they may be, will never crown our own heads with laurel. I would recommend you to use quota-

tions as a good cook uses cayenne pepper—only on rare occasions. Watch the life that goes on around you, observe closely, study hard, and practice faithfully; by these steps, and by these steps only, you may climb to the success I sincerely wish you. Truly yours,

R. S. TRUMAN.

Honor read that letter many times. At last with a heavy heart she carried it to her room, and placed it with her rejected manuscript in a box that she tied up carefully.

"I don't believe I ever shall have courage to look at either of them again," she said sadly to Miss Clark.

"Well, you've learned a lesson," Miss Clark said wisely, "an' in the end it will do you good. And I think you ought to be very grateful to that Dr. Truman, Honor. He put himself to a good deal of trouble for you; and I must say, it seems to me pretty presumptuous for people, who are just trying to write and ain't got no reputation, to ask busy men, who have made their names and reputations by hard work, to help 'em to get started."

Honor colored painfully. "Oh," she said in a regretful voice, "I never thought of that. Well," she continued in a moment, "I am very grateful to Dr. Truman, but his letter makes me think of the hand of iron in the glove of velvet, for kind as it sounds I can read between the

lines, and I know he thought me ignorant, and conceited, and my essay crude and ordinary."

"That's likely enough," Miss Clark said coolly. "But, Honor," she hastened to add, as she saw Honor's troubled face, "I do believe that when people find out that they are ignorant they are really beginning to grow wise; and I don't believe this failure will hurt you, for I have always noticed that the people who persevere through difficulties are the ones who succeed."

Honor's smile looked like a pale sunbeam lost among rain clouds. "I never expect now to succeed as a writer," she said, "I am too discouraged ever to try again."

"Hum," Miss Clark answered, "I've heard discouraged people talk before to-day, Honor, and I'll just tell you, for your comfort, that it's my opinion, if there really is a book in your head, that it will get written some day. You know whenever there is a live chicken in an egg it's pretty sure to break the shell. But I believe," Miss Clark continued soberly, "I believe for the present, Honor, it will be to your advantage to leave that book in your head. You know there are changes before you an' me, an' you ain't no readier for 'em than you was ten days ago. You have tried your own plan,

an' you have found that it won't work. Now, though I ain't no preacher, I'll just tell you—" and Miss Clark's voice was slow and reverent now—" that if I was you, I'd try to find out God's plan for me; and if he wanted me to make bread, instead of books, why I'd just try to make the bread."

CHAPTER IV.

SCHOOL AND SHOP.

"We are children still,
Wayward and wistful; with one hand we cling,
To the familiar things we call our own,
And with the other, resolute of will,
Grope in the dark for what the day will bring."
—Longfellow.

FOR several days after the return of her manuscript, Honor seemed listless strangely indifferent to all that was transpiring about her. There was plenty of bustle and confusion in the house now. Squire Skinner was there frequently, and Miss Clark was busy from morning till night, packing and making preparations for her own speedy departure. Kind neighbors called to sympathize with the orphaned girl, and went away wondering what would become of her, and still Honor wandered aimlessly from room to room in her old home, and looked with tearful eyes at all she was soon to part with, and found it as impossible, as in the beginning of her trouble, to decide upon her future course.

She thought and prayed much during those

sad days, but still the way before her looked very dark. No good fairy came with offers of assistance, and no work that she could think of seemed feasible or possible. Squire Skinner was impatient to secure his own interests; it was well-understood now that when all her father's debts were paid there would be absolutely nothing left for Honor; the few dollars in her purse were slowly dwindling away, and it was imperatively necessary for her to exert herself, and endeavor to find work and a home elsewhere. With the dawn of each new day Miss Clark's question, What will you do next? pressed more urgently for an answer; and still Honor was as incapable as ever of giving it one.

But this state of affairs could not last. We cannot, even if we would, remain undecided as to our course in this world long. Necessity lays her constraining hand upon us and sternly says, "Go forward;" and whether our way leads over rugged mountains, or through green and restful valleys, forward we must go.

Slowly but surely this imperative necessity roused Honor from her mournful dreams; and one bright morning, after a night passed in anxious thought, she arose with her mind fully decided as to the first step she would take. It was still very early. She dressed herself for a

journey, packed her traveling bag, knelt for a few moments, and committed herself to the care of her Father in heaven, and then went to Miss Clark's room. Her light tap on the door effectually aroused Miss Clark from her last morning nap, and opening her eyes she looked wonderingly at Honor.

"Why, child," she exclaimed, "what is the matter? Why have you got your hat on; where

are you going?"

"I am going to the city," Honor answered with much composure.

If Honor had said she was going up in a balloon Miss Clark could not have looked more surprised.

"To the city," she echoed, "Honor, have you lost your reason, what are you going to do in the city?"

"Follow the example of Whittington, and seek my fortune," Honor replied quietly.

Miss Clark was already up and nearly dressed. She did not answer Honor at once, but in a minute, while with unusual energy she thrust the hair-pins through her still thick braids, she said, in the tone of one presenting an unanswerable argument, "Whittington was a man, and he had a cat."

"Yes ma'am," Honor replied, "and I am a woman, and I have common sense."

Miss Clark stopped in her hair dressing, and looked at the girl with eyes that denoted great dissatisfaction.

"No, you are not a woman," she said with decision. "You are nothing but a young and ignorant girl, and you are about as fit to go to the city in search of your fortune, as a baby that never has stood on its feet is to walk a mile."

"I do not think so—" Honor began; but Miss Clark stopped her.

"Honor," she said emphatically, "it is useless for us to argue; but if, as you say, you really have got common sense you will just take off that hat, an' stay at home. I have lived longer than you, an' I have had more experience, and I know that the nearer a young girl keeps to the smoke of her own chimney the safer she is."

"Yes," Honor admitted, with a little note of sadness in her voice, "that is true, Miss Clark, when she has a chimney to stay by. But you must remember that I have no home now, and so I have no choice; I must do something to support myself."

"I guess I don't need to have you tell me that," Miss Clark said with a toss of her head. "Ain't I been trying for weeks to make you realize your situation? I know your circum-

stances just as well as I know my own. But circumstances ain't meant to be stumbling blocks, and they never will be when we don't hinder Providence. Now do you just make up your mind to stay here in Broadfields, an' find something to do among the neighbors who have known you all your life. Folks who saw you first in your cradle, an' who have seen you almost every day since you were out of it, care a good deal more for you than the strangers will care who never saw you before to-day."

There was a tremor in Honor's voice, and though she tried to do so, it was difficult for her to force a smile. "Please do not try to discourage me, Miss Clark," she pleaded. "I am not very brave, and I need all my courage now. I do not want to act foolishly, but if you will think a moment you will see that I must go. What can I do here?"

"What?" Miss Clark surveyed Honor from the flower on her hat to the hem of her dress. "Well, it is true," she confessed reluctantly after a second's thought; "I do not know what you can do here in Broadfields, Honor, or I am sure I would have told you before this morning. The fact is, you don't seem to fit in nowhere." Miss Clark had received a plain, district school education, and when she took liberties with her grammar, and indulged in the use of "double negatives," she did so—as she sometimes condescended to explain—"because, in her opinion, if two negatives didn't add to the sense, they did add to the emphasis."

She left Honor now to consider her unfortunate want of adaptability, while she turned to her glass and hurriedly pinned on a collar. "It does appear to me," she remarked when that was done, "as if some folks were just fit for nothing but to be put down in gardens, and fed on rose leaves and honey."

"Well," Honor said with a praiseworthy effort to be cheerful, "if ambrosial food is what I need, one thing is sure, I shall never find it here, and so it is the more necessary for me to go where gardens are more numerous. And now, Miss Clark, if you will give me a cup of coffee before I go, I shall be very grateful."

"Child, there is nothing good, that I would not give you if I could," Miss Clark answered: and in the strength of the coffee that she quickly prepared and brought to Honor, she tried to find compensation for all the good things she could

not bestow on her.

"When will you be back?" Miss Clark asked at the last moment, as she stood with Honor on the door-step.

"To-night, I hope, by the last train," Honor answered; "but if I am not, don't worry about

me. I feel like one of God's little sparrows. He takes care of them, you know, and so you must believe that he will watch over me."

It was not often that Miss Clark suffered her deepest feelings to find expression in words; and the occasions were rare indeed when her reverence for the Bible allowed her to quote it in her every-day life. But as she stood on the old door-step that sweet summer morning, and looked at the fair young face that was just going from her, a sudden and tender impulse caused her to whisper, as she kissed Honor good-bye,

"'He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.' And Honor," she added with loving emphasis, "I believe he will."

Do we sometimes speak under a momentary inspiration? And did some good angel prompt Miss Clark just then to whisper these words?

So, in her friendless state, it seemed to Honor that morning, and through all her long and lonely ride to the city, the memory of that tender promise cheered and sustained her.

It was not quite ten when she reached the city. She had not left home to drift aimlessly through the busy streets; she had a definite purpose in her mind, and with as little delay as possible she found her way to the School Agency of which the day before she had read an adver-

tisement in one of the daily papers. It was true that she did not feel well qualified to teach; but stern necessity gave her no choice of employments, and if she could obtain a situation in a school she hoped by faithful study out of school-hours to correct all her deficiencies. Let her once reach the Agency and she trusted that all her troubles would soon be happily settled. But she was speedily undeceived.

The gentlemanly manager of the Agency received her politely, offered her a paper prepared for applicants, and requested her to state in it her name, age, residence, where she was educated, church connections, testimonials, and references, and the particular branches she desired to teach. At the same time he smilingly informed her that his office fee was three dollars.

Honor took the paper, and was about to write as requested, when a sudden thought occurred to her, and she looked up at the manager.

"I want a situation immediately," she said.
"Do you think, if I comply with your requirements, that you can find one for me?"

The manager looked at her critically, curled the end of his moustache; seemed to consider her question for a moment, and then said:

"The summer is a very poor season for obtaining immediate situations in schools. Later, without doubt I can do something for you, espe-

cially if you are accomplished. Music—French—German—drawing—and painting"—he counted the words off on his fingers as he spoke—"are you proficient in any of these branches? The patrons of boarding-schools," he added wisely, "think more of such studies, nowadays, than they do of the plain English branches."

With a gloomy face Honor listened to him, and once more the memory of her neglected opportunities came back to sting her with unavailing regrets.

She had studied music, and she could sing sweetly; but she had never liked to practice, and as far as possible she had evaded that duty. Now, in her hour of need, she was painfully conscious, though large sums had been spent on her musical education, that her knowledge was too imperfect, and her skill as a performer too inferior for her music to be of any service to her. But music was not the only accomplishment upon which she had wasted both time and money. She had taken lessons in both drawing and painting, and she had drawing-books and port-folios well-filled with specimens of poor work; but shares in an imaginary gold mine in the moon would have given her as good a support as she could hope to earn with either her pencil or brush. French and German had been included in her course

of study, and she could, without much difficulty, roughly translate quotations from those languages when she came across them in her reading. But it was simply impossible for her to write a brief letter in either language correctly; and she recalled, with a feeling akin to terror, the long pages of perplexing verbs over which she had pored through many dreary hours, and that were still, as she well knew, unmastered.

No, she could not teach music and the languages—not even their rudiments to beginners—for she had a conscience, and she felt that if she started a child wrong in its studies she might do it an irreparable injury. Silently as she came to that conclusion Honor placed the blank on the table.

"I think I will not try to fill it out since accomplishments are so necessary," she said. "But," and she looked wishfully at the manager, "there are the public schools, accomplishments are surely not so essential in them. Could I not obtain a situation as a primary teacher in one of them?"

"Possibly," the manager answered with a shrug of his shoulders, "but the public schools usually graduate their own teachers, and there are numerous applicants for every vacancy.

Obviously Honor could hope for no assistance from the manager of the School Agency, and with much the feeling of a mountain climber, who sees strand after strand of the rope to which he is clinging break, she left the office. She knew that she deserved her failure; even in the first keen pang of disappointment she realized that, with her imperfect education, she would have been in a false position as a teacher. But to know that we have only ourselves to blame for our failures is at all times a sorrowful comfort, and now Honor felt almost crushed by her disappointment.

Again Miss Clark's question, What will you do next? rang in her ears; and once more she said hopelessly to herself, I do not know. She had come to the city for the single purpose of visiting the School Agency, and now, in utter doubt and bewilderment, after walking a few steps she stopped at the corner of the street, and looked helplessly about her. Rapidly the everchanging stream of life flowed past her: richly dressed women, who might have learned the meaning of that hard word want from their dictionaries, but never from actual experience, beautiful children-who looked like flowers even this stern world would love to cherish-and men-strong, earnest, and selfreliant—all with preoccupied minds, intent on

business or pleasure, hurried by her, and left her standing there sorrowful and alone.

A great crowd, as some one has said, seems to have no heart; and as she glanced from one strange face to another, Honor bitterly thought that even in the Sahara she could scarcely feel lonelier than in that thronged and fashionable street. It seemed no place for her, and sadly comparing herself to "Poor Joe," she was about to "move on," when her steps were arrested by a card hanging in the store window just before her:

"Wanted a shop-girl."

For a few moments Honor stood as if spellbound and gazed at that card. It seemed to offer her work of which she had never dreamed. Should she-could she-she asked herself-go in and apply for that situation? She knew little about a shop-girl's duties, but she always had considered herself, in education and position, far above the shop-girls she had seen in her shopping excursions. There was a short and sharp struggle with the pride of which she had her full share; but with an almost fierce exertion of her will she conquered her reluctance, pushed open the noiseless swinging door, and entered the beautiful store. A few words explained her errand to a clerk near the door, and a few steps carried her to the private and

luxurious office where the two proprietors of the store were sitting together.

One of them, a large and consequential looking man, turned at her entrance and gave her a sharp and critical stare.

With much difficulty Honor managed to make known her errand.

- "The shop-girl—did they still want one?—she would be glad if they would try her."
- "Have you had any experience?" demanded the large gentleman.
 - "No, none," Honor answered.

A low sound, like a suppressed whistle, was the first reply she received to that confession, but the second gentleman—a gray-haired man whose face Honor thought very pleasant—remarked quietly, "Want of experience is not an insurmountable objection."

Honor felt the difference in the manners of her two examiners, but she waited in silence for the next question. It was short and blunt.

- "City or country?"
- "Country," Honor replied meekly.
- "Hum," the large gentleman said, in a tone that Honor felt denoted disapproval, while he gave her another critical and leisurely survey. Then he started up suddenly, and pulled out his watch.
 - "I declare, I had quite forgotten," he ex-

claimed. "I ought to be at the bank now; the directors meet at twelve. Here, Winthrop, you must take charge of this matter; I will abide by your decision." And grasping his hat the consequential man of business hurried off, and Honor was left alone with his partner.

"Be seated, if you please," Mr. Winthrop said kindly—for Honor had remained standing during the large gentleman's examination—and as she took the chair he offered her, he asked: "Do you know anything about this work? I mean," he hastened to explain, as he saw that Honor did not understand his question, "do you know anything about the annoying and disagreeable experiences you may—"he paused a second and then with firm emphasis added—"will have to endure behind a counter as a shopgirl."

The color rushed to Honor's face. "No," she said with some difficulty, "I do not know anything about them. But"—and in spite of her efforts to be calm her voice trembled sadly—"I would try to endure them, for I must do something to support myself."

"Have you parents or friends in this city, with whom you would have a pleasant and safe home?" Mr. Winthrop asked now.

"No," Honor answered, "I should board."

Mr. Winthrop looked at her thoughtfully for a moment, and then he said:

"You are from the country. Have you any knowledge of what city life—I mean the city life of a shop-girl in a poor boarding house—must be?"

Once more Honor's trembling lips answered, "No."

"There are many beautiful things to be seen and enjoyed in the city," Mr. Winthrop said quietly, "and, for those who have leisure to profit by them, there are almost inestimable advantages. I would not underrate them, but neither would I underrate the dangers—" he stopped and once more looked closely at Honor, and then asked:

"Is it absolutely necessary for you to leave your home in the country?"

Honor looked at him with eyes whose truthfulness he could not doubt.

"I do not know of anything I can do in the country place where I have always lived," she explained simply, "and it is very necessary for me to do something to support myself, for I am an orphan and I have no home."

Poor child, trembled on Mr. Winthrop's lips, but he only said, "Can you not teach; have you tried to find a situation in some school?"

"Yes," Honor answered sadly, "I have just

been to the School Agency, but they could not do anything for me there. I am not accomplished enough."

Mr. Winthrop smiled a little at that innocent and unexpected admission. "Teachers are sometimes wanted for the plain English branches, as well as for accomplishments," he said kindly. "May I ask where you were educated?"

"At Cedar Grove Seminary in Lexington," Honor said. "I graduated from that school. But I feel now," she humbly confessed, "that I ought not to teach, for I am only 'smattered.' I know nothing thoroughly."

Perhaps Mr. Winthrop was a little surprised by that frank admission, but with his knowledge of young ladies' schools he did not doubt it. "You are right," he said gravely, "never wrong others by attempting to teach what you do not know yourself. But you are young," he added kindly, "and with a little faithful study you can probably soon perfect yourself in the studies you are conscious of being deficient in."

Honor's face and voice were both very sad as she answered, "I wish I could study now, but I cannot, I must work."

"Are you thrown entirely upon your own resources for support?" Mr. Winthrop asked.

"Have you no friends nor relations able and willing to help you now?"

"None that I know of," Honor said. "My parents were both only children; if I have any relations they are very distant ones, and I do not even know their names."

Honor's sad story interested Mr. Winthrop, but without expressing any sympathy, in a cool and deliberate voice he said:

"You are a stranger in this city, and you have no friends here. Now, I will be frank with you and tell you, that with my knowledge of the world, before I would advise you to take a situation as a shop-girl, in this or any other store, I would say take what might be thought by many a much humbler position. Take—if necessary—a servant's place in a Christian family."

For a few moments Honor looked doubtful. Her pride rebelled at that humble word, servant. All her life she had been served; it was not pleasant now to think of serving others in the lowly capacity of a housemaid. While she struggled with her pride Mr. Winthrop watched her. He was a close observer, and he wondered a little sadly, if, in spite of the germs of a beautiful character that he thought he had discovered in her, she would prove after all only one of the great multitude, who choose shams

before realities, and care more for what they seem to be than for what they really are.

His doubts were soon dispelled; into Honor's troubled mind two little thoughts stole silently, and finding welcome, clothed her in the beautiful grace of humility.

He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," whispered one of the angels who had charge over her that day; "The disciple is not above his master," gently added another of the bright messengers, and with all her noblest impulses quickened by these words, Honor looked at Mr. Winthrop, and said with a child's frankness, "I had not thought of a servant's place before, but perhaps that would be the best place for me, and I will take it, if—" she added with a sincere humility that acknowledged and regretted her incompetence—" if I know enough about housework to be capable of filling such a place."

Mr. Winthrop's eyes rested for a moment on the small and prettily gloved hands that were quietly folded in Honor's lap, and then he said:

"When I spoke of a servant's place I said, take it if necessary. I did not mean that you should take such a place at once, without first trying to find some other work for which you

may be better adapted. I believe in service," Mr. Winthrop continued earnestly, "I know of no more royal motto for a Christian man or woman than that old kingly one, Ich dien—I serve. But at the same time, I also believe that the work of God's servants should be apportioned, like their talents, according to their several abilities. In my opinion the work one is best fitted for, is the work one should seek to do."

"If only," Honor said in a sober little parenthesis, "one can tell for what one is best fitted."

"Ay, there's the rub," Mr. Winthrop said with a smile, that was quickly followed by a very grave look. He did not speak again for several moments, and then he said, "I would like your name and references."

Honor gave her name, but then in evident embarrassment, she stopped.

"And your references," Mr. Winthrop insisted.

"I am afraid I haven't any," Honor said with undisguised trouble in both her face and voice. "I forgot that they would be necessary. I don't know anybody in this city only——"

"Well, only whom?" Mr. Winthrop demanded

a little sternly.

"An old lady, and I don't know her very

well," Honor hesitatingly explained, "but last summer, a year ago, when she was boarding in Broadfields she was thrown from her carriage and injured severely. Ours was the nearest house, so she was brought there and she stayed with us some days. Would she do for a reference?" and Honor waited anxiously for Mr. Winthrop's answer.

"Give me her name," he said.

"Mrs. Charles Everett, 315 Lincoln Square."

Mr. Winthrop nodded in a satisfied manner. "Do you intend calling on her to-day?" he asked.

Once more Honor looked troubled. Mrs. Everett had impressed her as being a very proud woman, and Honor's own intense pride shrank from making an appeal for help that she fancied, might be called begging.

"Is it necessary for me to call on her?" she asked anxiously.

"Do you mean because you have referred me to her?" Mr. Winthrop asked. "No, you need not feel obliged to call for that reason. I know Mrs. Everett and will see her myself. Can you call here to-morrow morning at ten o'clock?"

"Yes," Honor answered, and feeling that the interview was over she arose. But as he looked at her, her youth and inexperience

prompted Mr. Winthrop to ask quickly, "And in the meantime what will you do with yourself. Where will you spend the night?"

"I wanted to go home on the evening train," Honor answered, "but since it is best for me to remain in the city, I will go to the Union Hotel. My father always went there," she added with childlike candor.

"But that great hotel will be a lonely and unsuitable place for you," Mr. Winthrop said with a thrill of pity. "Let me direct you to a safer place for a young girl. Here—" and he took a card from his desk and wrote a few words on it—"take this to the matron of the Working Girls' Home, 49 Bancroft street. She will take good care of you."

Honor took the tiny slip of pasteboard, and with a relieved and grateful heart she left the store. She did not think it necessary to continue her search for work, for though it was evident that Mr. Winthrop did not intend to accept her as a shop-girl, she felt very confident that in some way he designed to help her. She had nothing to do now but wait patiently for the next morning, and feeling tired as well as relieved, she gladly turned her steps toward the Working Girls' Home.

The matron, a pleasant-mannered and motherly woman, received her kindly. Mr. Winthrop's

card was an all-sufficient introduction; and Honor was soon resting in a little room, that, though simple enough for a nun, was at the same time neat and clean enough for a queen.

CHAPTER V.

LAMPS AND CANDY.

"Many a hopeless matter doth God arrange;
What I expected never came to pass;
What I did not expect God brought to bear,
So hath it been my whole experience through."
—Robert Browning.

HONOR counted the very minutes the next morning, in her anxiety to be punctual in keeping her appointment with Mr. Winthrop and promptly at ten she was at the store. Her confidence in Mr. Winthrop had been strengthened by the matron of the Home, who had told her many stories of his kindness and generosity. She firmly believed that her interview with him would end her anxious quest for work. Somewhere, if not in his store, he would find a place for her. Buoyed up with this glad hope, the girl walked through the crowded store and knocked on the office door. It was opened by a clerk who was just passing out.

"Can I see Mr. Winthrop?" Honor asked.

"He isn't in, but Mr. Owen is. Step in if you please."

With a thrill of disappointment Honor entered the office, and found herself in the presence of the gentleman who had impressed her so disagreeably the day before.

He looked up at her with an expression in his face that seemed to Honor to say, What, are you here again? and dreading an interview with him, as much as she desired one with his partner, she stood near the door, and asked timidly, "Can I see Mr. Winthrop?"

"Impossible," was the prompt answer. "Mr, Winthrop is on his way to Chicago."

In her susprise and dismay Honor looked helplessly at Mr. Owen for a minute. Then she found strength to say, "But Mr. Winthrop told me to call this morning."

"Very likely, and he may have told a dozen other people to call, for he had no idea yesterday of going away."

"Will he return soon?" Honor asked tremulously.

"I cannot say. He was telegraphed for last night; his son is very ill; under such circumstances it is impossible for me to name the day of his return."

While he was speaking, Mr. Owen was at the same time opening letters. Now he threw several into the waste-basket, and with a number in his hand looked with some curiosity as well as impatience at Honor, who uncertain what to do still stood by the door.

"You were here yesterday, weren't you?" he asked, "did Mr. Winthrop promise you a place here in this store?"

"No," Honor managed to say.

Mr. Owen's face expressed his satisfaction.

"Do you want anything of me?" he asked in a quick voice.

"No," Honor said faintly again.

"Very well, then, good morning," and Mr. Owen placed an open letter before him on his desk and took up a pen.

Honor felt that she was dismissed, and with a face as sad as a few minutes before it had been bright and hopeful, she turned and walked slowly out.

In Honor's young life, until within the last few weeks, there had been no trials; and only once before, when her manuscript was returned to her, had she felt as she did at that moment. The disappointment was so unlooked for, and so complete, that she was stunned. Slowly she crossed the street, entered a little park, and sat down on a bench.

What should she do next? Return to Broadfields with her future as undecided as when she left there? She could not do that; for even Broadfields would not be her home much longer. Suddenly while she brooded over her trouble she remembered Mrs. Everett. She had shrank from appealing to her, but now in her friendless and almost destitute condition, she felt that her pride was a luxury she could no longer afford to indulge. She knew that Mrs. Everett was an influential lady. Mr. Winthrop had said he knew her; possibly he had already seen her, and related her story. Anyway if she called on her now she might be able to help her. As that hope dawned in her heart Honor started up. A policeman stood near, and she asked to be directed the shortest way to 315 Lincoln Square.

"Cross the park, turn to your right, and walk six blocks," the policeman answered. And Honor followed his directions.

Since she left the "Home" it had grown very cloudy, and as she went up the brown-stone steps of the beautiful mansion, whose door-plate bore Mrs. Everett's name, it began to rain.

Honor looked ruefully at the black clouds and falling drops, and then, with an intense longing to see a friendly face and hear a kind voice, she rang the bell.

"Is Mrs. Everett in?" she asked of the colored waiter who opened the door.

"Mrs. Everett left this morning for the country," was the concise answer.

With difficulty Honor conquered the choking sensation in her throat.

"Will you tell me where she has gone?" she asked, with a faint hope that the answer would be Broadfields.

"To Saratoga."

With despair in her face and heart, Honor turned and slowly descended the steps. It was raining hard now, but she scarcely knew it. Her last resource had failed her. In all that great city she did not know of another soul to whom she could appeal for help. She must go back to Broadfields; there was nothing else for her to do. As she came to this decision she glanced at her little watch. It was only half-past eleven, and the afternoon train for Broadfields did not go out until four. Soberly Honor counted the hours between, four and a half, and the rain was falling in the steady way that so surely denotes a rainy day.

She had left her traveling bag at the "Home," and now there seemed nothing for her to do but to return there, and spend under the matron's care the weary hours that must pass before she could leave the city.

With a downcast and troubled face, very unlike the smiling one with which she had left it but two hours before, Honor entered the matron's little parlor.

"Well, have you had a successful call?" the good woman asked, kindly.

Honor dropped down into a chair, and the tears she had hitherto controlled filled her eyes.

"O, Mrs. Morgan," she said, pitifully, "I am so disappointed."

Kind Mrs. Morgan was used to dealing with disappointed and discouraged girls.

"Tell me all about it," she said, with ready sympathy. And as well as she could, through the tears that like the rain without now fell thick and fast, Honor told her sad story. "I felt so sure this morning that Mr. Winthrop would help me," she sobbed in conclusion, "and now I am utterly discouraged."

"And you can't think of anything to do now?" Mrs. Morgan asked gently.

"No, there is nothing for me to do, except to go back to Broadfields and starve there," Honor said, bitterly.

"Hush, don't say that. Take off your hat and lie down on the lounge and rest. You are tired now, and dark things look darker still when we are weary. There now," Mrs. Morgan said, after she had seen Honor's head placed comfortably on the sofa pillow, "now do you lie still until I come back. The ladies who manage the 'Home' are here to-day, and I must go and see them."

Honor was glad to obey Mrs. Morgan and lie still, for her head was aching as well as her heart. She clasped her hands over her head, closed her eyes, and tried to banish and forget painful thoughts; but her mind was too burdened to allow her to rest. The anxious question—so many troubled hearts, in this world of changes, are daily asking, What shall I do? kept pressing for an answer, and at last, with a despairing cry, she slipped from the lounge, and kneeling beside it, buried her face in the pillow.

She could not pray; in her repeated disappointments she had lost faith as well as courage; and to her—as so often to troubled and despondent souls—heaven seemed just then very far away, and God indifferent to her bitter need.

Tears, the saddest she had shed since her father's death, flowed freely for awhile; and when they ceased she still remained kneeling beside the lounge, too absorbed in her sorrowful thoughts to notice the opening of the door, or to hear the gentle step that crossed the floor and stopped beside her. The touch of a soft hand on her hair startled her; she lifted her head and looked up into a pair of eyes that were beautiful with sympathy and womanly feeling.

"My poor child," said a low sweet voice,

"what does this mean? you are in trouble, can I help you?"

Honor had staggered to her feet, and now showed the sweet looking woman who was watching her, a sad young face, with tearswollen eyes, and sensitive trembling lips.

"What does it mean? What is the matter?" the lady asked again.

Honor tried to smile, but

Honor tried to smile, but a long sobbing sigh came instead.

"Oh, I am in so much trouble," she gasped.

"Sit down," the lady said with gentle firmness; and laying her hand on Honor's arm she drew her down to a seat beside her on the sofa.

"Now let us have a little talk together," she said kindly. "You are Honor Montgomery, aren't you?"

"Yes, ma'am," Honor answered, while she wondered how the lady knew her name.

"I thought so. I have just seen the matron, Mrs. Morgan. I am Mrs. Stanley. I am here to-day with the Ladies' Committee. Now, that we know each other, my dear, let us talk together like friends. Mrs. Morgan told me that you were an orphan, and came to the city yesterday looking for some employment, and had been disappointed in your search. Is that true?"

"Too true," Honor said faintly.

With a hand that was almost motherly in its gentleness, Mrs. Stanley drew back a lock of hair that had fallen over Honor's face, and as she did so she asked:

"Why did you leave the country, where there is so much room, and come to this overcrowded city?"

"I had to leave my home; I could find nothing to do there, and I must work or starve, for I have no money." And once more Honor's eyes grew misty.

"You must be calm and answer my questions. I want to help you if I can. Tell me what you have tried to do?"

With her mind full of her great disappointments Honor replied sadly, "First, I tried to write."

"Write what?" Mrs. Stanley asked in surprise.

"An essay for a magazine," Honor answered, in a humble voice.

Mrs. Stanley looked at her now with curious as well as interested eyes. She remembered the literary ambitions of her own girlhood, and the sympathy that sprang from the memory of a like experience touched her voice, as she asked, "Why did you fail?"

"Because I had to," Honor said soberly.

"I could not write anything original. I could only say what others had already said better."

Mrs. Stanley laid her own firm and beautiful hand on Honor's trembling one, and said gently, "Never mind; quotations come easily to the young when they have read much and experienced little. Some day, perhaps, you will try again and succeed better. But what else have you tried to do?"

"I haven't really tried to do anything else," Honor answered, "but I thought of teaching; I went to the School Agency yesterday."

"And what prevented your succeeding there?" Mrs. Stanley asked in a quiet but interested voice.

"My own ignorance," Honor confessed, with a sob. "I am only smattered and superficial. I don't know anything well."

Mrs. Stanley had not been for years President of the Young Woman's Christian Association of that large city without learning many sad facts about the superficial education of women. Honor's acknowledgment did not surprise her. She only said, "Yes, I understand," and went on with her catechism.

"What next?" she asked.

"I tried yesterday, after leaving the School Agency, to get a situation as a shop-girl in Winthrop & Owen's store," Honor replied.

"And failed again; why?"

"Mr. Winthrop said I was not fitted for the situation. He said I had better be a servant girl in a Christian family." And now Honor broke down and fairly cried.

"Well, why not be a servant?" Mrs. Stanley

asked calmly.

"I would be, but I don't know how to be—I don't know anything useful." And Honor covered her crimson face with her hands as she confessed her incompetence.

"How long has this been going on?" Mrs. Stanley asked. "I mean," she explained, as Honor looked up in doubt of her meaning, "how long have you been seeking work?"

"Since my father's death," Honor sobbed.

"He died four weeks ago."

"Poor child. Poor child," Mrs. Stanley said with a tender sympathy that endeared her forever to Honor. "Are you a Christian?" she asked gently in a moment.

"I want to be," Honor said with a sigh, "I

am trying to be."

"Then you must remember and rest upon the precious promise—'All things work together for good to them that love God.' You are sorely tried just now, but some day you will see how all your trials worked for your truest happiness and good."

- "I don't know-" Honor said doubtfully.
- "But I know," Mrs. Stanley said with sweet insistence; "from the outcome of my own trials I can foretell the issue of yours, if you do but trust and pray. But now I must ask you a few more questions. First: What work do you want to do?"
- "Anything by which I can support myself," Honor answered.
- "That is brave and right," Mrs. Stanley said encouragingly, "but now you must tell me this: What one thing do you think yourself best fitted to do?"
- "I don't know," Honor said with a discouraged sigh, "I'm afraid I am not fitted for anything useful."

In the face of such evident incompetence even Mrs. Stanley, used though she was to achieving impossibilities, almost, for and with helpless girls, felt a little discouraged. But after a moment's thought she said:

"Think carefully now. You have always lived at home; isn't there some one work you have been accustomed to do that might be of use to you now? Can you make cake for instance?"

"No. Miss Clark always made the cake," Honor answered. "But," she added in a curious little voice, "I can—make—candy."

"Candy?" Mrs. Stanley did not smile, she was too sincerely anxious to assist the friendless girl beside her to feel amused at her helplessness. She was silent for a moment, but then she said cheerfully:

"I am afraid it would not answer for you to devote yourself to candy making as a means of support, but every thing we know can at times be made useful. I am going into the country in a few days, and as my little people are very fond of candy I always carry a supply with me, and I like home-made candy because I know it is pure. Now suppose you make me a number of pounds, and I will buy it of you, instead of going to Holland's for it, and I will pay you his price."

In her surprise and joy Honor's voice was almost hysterical as she exclaimed:

"Oh, will you?"

"Yes, I will surely. By the way," and Mrs. Stanley's smile and voice not only asked but won Honor's confidence. "You said you had no money; now will you tell me how far that is literally true?"

Honor's face flushed, but the eyes into which Mrs. Stanley looked were frank and truthful. "Papa died poor," she said softly. "A few days before he died he gave me twenty-five dollars to get some new clothes with. The most

of that I have been obliged to spend. I have but eight dollars in my purse now, and when that is gone I shall have only what I can earn."

Mrs. Stanley's sweet face grew sad with sympathy as she listened to Honor's simple statement, and for a second her hand sought the well-filled purse in her own pocket. But she checked her kind but mistaken impulse. "Pay generously for work, but do not destroy the self-respect of the poor by treating them as beggars," was her motto, and she obeyed it now.

"During the next week," she said, "you may make me twenty pounds of candy—I have some friends who will be glad to share it with me if I do not want it all. You can send it to me by express; I will defray all the charges, and give you, as I have already promised, Holland's prices."

"Oh, thank you," Honor said gratefully, "that money will last a long time."

"Before it is gone we must find a way to make more," Mrs. Stanley said, while she smiled with pleasure at the sight of Honor's innocent joy. "Now I want you to think again. What else can you do, that some one might like to have you do? About the house I mean."

Honor was silent for a few minutes, and her

face looked thoughtful. "Oh—" she exclaimed suddenly, and then she stopped.

"Well," Mrs. Stanley said encouragingly. "What does 'oh' mean?"

"A very little thing," Honor said ingenuously, "but papa used to say that it added very much to his comfort. I can clean lamps well. I know I can do that," she insisted with a childlike delight at having found one thing she was really proficient in, "for they always burn brightly, and they never smell nor smoke."

"Three very important essentials, as every housekeeper knows," Mrs. Stanley said with a smile. She did not speak again for several minutes, but she looked seriously at Honor, and seemed to be considering some important question in her own mind. Presently, as if she had come to a satisfactory decision, her face brightened.

"My dear," she said, "your accomplishment is a small one, as you say, but I think I see a way in which you can make it useful. I know an old lady who has, though she is not an invalid, a heart affection that makes pure air an absolute necessity. She lives in the country, and burns oil; and she complains piteously, that her evenings are rendered miserable by her lamps. Her servants never attend to them properly. They always smoke and smell and

she suffers in consequence. Now, my dear, this lady is a relation of mine; she is a good woman and you would have a safe home with her. You would, of course, have other duties to perform, besides just caring for her lamps, but you would find nothing required of you that you could not do easily if you were patient and willing to be directed. My aunt is peculiar and sometimes, perhaps, exacting; but she is never intentionally unjust or unkind. Now, if she should wish for your services, would you be willing to go to her?"

Willing? Honor's face had answered that question, before she found voice to say, "I cannot tell you how glad I should be to go to her."

"Then I will write to her this afternoon and tell her of you, and your accomplishments," Mrs. Stanley said, kindly, "and as soon as I receive her answer I will write to you. In the meantime you must make my candy, and trust that in some way, though it may be a way you do not see to-day, all your trials will be made to work together for your truest good. And one thing more," and Mrs. Stanley took Honor's hand tenderly in hers as she spoke—"You say you are trying to be a Christian. My child, don't be content with simply trying to be a Christian. Place yourself gladly and

unreservedly in God's hands and be a Christian."

Honor's lips trembled and a troubled look darkened her eyes "How can I be such a sure Christian?" she asked, sadly.

With tender interest Mrs. Stanley looked at the young girl. She knew that unsatisfied yearnings and aspirations had prompted her timid question, but she also knew that each soul must live its own life, and learn its own lessons; and so, taught by her own rich Christian experience, she answered, gently,

"Ask God and let him teach you."

CHAPTER VI.

WHY MUST IT BE?

"Blindfolded and alone I stand
With unknown thresholds on each hand;
The darkness deepens as I grope,
Afraid to fear, afraid to hope;
Yet this one thing I learn to know,
Each day more surely as I go,
That doors are opened, ways are made,
Burdens are lifted, or are laid,
By some great law unseen and still
Unfathomed purpose to fulfill,
'Not as I will.'"

-Helen Hunt Jackson.

IT was with the glad sense of relief, that always follows a hard task attempted and accomplished, that Honor returned that night to Broadfields. Her naturally hopeful nature had quite recovered from the disappointment that at first had seemed so heavy. She felt very sure of Mrs. Stanley's assistance; she did not doubt the success of that lady's plan for her, and the anxious cares that had so long oppressed her seemed already only memories of a troubled past.

She greeted Miss Clark with a bright face,

and there was a ring of true joy in her voice as she said, as she took her seat at the tea-table, "Oh you don't know how glad I am to be home again."

"Hu—m," Miss Clark answered, as she placed the tea-pot on the table and seated herself behind it. "Have you come home to stay long?"

"No," Honor replied, while her bright face sobered a little, "if my plans work well my stay here will be very short."

"So you ain't got nothing more certain than plans to tell about," Miss Clark exclaimed in evident disappointment. "Well, I didn't think very much of your going to the city, Honor. It was my opinion that you might just as well go looking for will-o'-the-wisps as for work; and yet, since you would go, I did hope something more would come of it than just plans."

"Well," Honor said in a satisfied voice, something more has come of it."

"Sure?" Miss Clark asked. "Well, if you have really got certainties instead of plans,

why don't you tell me what they are?"

"Because you don't give me a chance to tell you," Honor said playfully. "But now, if you will listen, I will tell you in a few words what I expect to do. In the first place I am going to make twenty pounds of candy here in this house. I shall begin making it to-morrow, and I am to be well paid for it. That is sure, Miss Clark. In the second place—this is only a plan but I am sure it will become a certainty—I expect to go to Pennock Manor to live with a Mrs. Pennock. She is an old lady, and I am going to clean her lamps, and do—well, I don't know what else, but I suppose there will be plenty of odds and ends for me to attend to. Now, Miss Clark, won't you congratulate me?"

Miss Clark raised her tea-cup to her lips, drained it, and replaced it in her saucer. Then she sat back in her chair, folded her arms, and looked at Honor with a face that was very far from promising congratulations.

"Candy making and lamp cleaning," she said severely. "I want to know, Honor Montgomery, if, after spending four years at boarding-school, and having your poor father pay more than three thousand dollars for your education, that is all it comes to?"

"Yes," Honor answered meekly, "when it comes to the practical question of how I am to earn my bread and butter, that seems to be all my fine education can do for me."

"Well," Miss Clark said with emphasis, "I am ashamed of you, Honor."

"Not more than I am of myself," Honor said

with a face from which all the brightness had vanished.

Miss Clark noticed the change in the girl's expression, and was softened at once. "Well, Honor," she said gently, "I am sorry and disappointed, an' there ain't no use in my trying to deny it. I did hope you would do something more than common girls can do. You see, Honor, I wanted to be proud of you, and it stands to reason that it ain't very easy to be proud of your candy making and lamp cleaning, when you can't do nothing else after spending more than three thousand dollars. But I'll tell you one thing, Honor,-I ain't much at talking, but I do a good deal of observing-and it's my firm opinion that common things well done are pretty sure steps to the uncommon things. Now, if you can't do nothing but make candy and clean lamps, do you make your candy good and keep your lamps bright, an' maybe sometime you will get something better to do. I am sure I hope so for-" and once more Miss Clark's disapproval had to find expression-"I must say candy-making and lamp cleaning ain't much to show for a three thousand dollar education. And-I don't know as I ought to say it, Honor, but I can't help kinder wondering what your poor father would say if he knew about it."

What her father would say? As she listened to Miss Clark's sharp reproof, there came over Honor such a deep and keen feeling of regret for her wasted opportunities, that her head drooped and her eyes grew dim with tears she would not allow to fall. But the next instant all her unavailing regrets were forgotten in a vivid and almost overwhelming remembrance of her father's never failing and tender sympathy. She felt that if he could know now of her trials and failures because of her incompetence, he would yearn only to help and strengthen her. The thought of her father's sure compassion soothed and comforted her, and as she dwelt upon it there came a quick apprehension, such as she never had known before, of what God's love for his erring and ignorant children must be. For the first time she caught a glimpse of the precious truth, that the fondest earthly affection is but a faint type of God's enduring love, and from her faith in her own father she was taught first to believe that the Father in heaven has pity for all our failures, and never forgets or forsakes his children.

That same evening Mrs. Stanley sat in her cozy library and wrote the following letter:

123 Lincoln Avenue, N. Y. City.

DEAR AUNT ESTHER:—Do you ever think how much the people in this world who wear invisible handcuffs—I

mean those who are fettered and manacled because of their own incompetence—need our sympathy and loving help?

Perhaps you will answer, that such self-fettered people are the very ones it is hardest to reach and help; but when love is willing, love can always find a way, you know, and I am beginning to think that none are so incompetent that they cannot fit in somewhere, if only—and this I will frankly own is the great difficulty—that not impossible "somewhere" can be found. Now, Aunt Esther, you must let me tell you a little story.

I met a young girl to-day who is poor, lonely, and an orphan. A graduate of Cedar Grove Seminary—if adversity had not tested her education—she would have been always thought well educated. But a few weeks ago her father died, and she found that she was left penniless and without relations in a world where money and friends are indispensable to one's happiness. Then she thought over her acquirements, and discovered in them all one great defect—"Thorough" is a word in her dictionary but it has had no place in her life.

She cannot teach, for she is only smattered with knowledge; she is not rooted and grounded in any study as a teacher ought to be. She cannot sew well enough to be a seamstress, and she has no practical knowledge of housework; yet she must earn her own bread and butter or starve.

I found her in great distress to-day, and while I listened to her story, I did for a few minutes feel hopeless. Sometimes—I say it with all reverence, Aunt Esther—I am tempted to wonder if God himself is not often puzzled what to do with such incompetent, helpless creatures, as this young girl seems to be. But I remember, God sees all the possibilities and latent capabilities of his children, where we see only their deficiencies, and so he is never at a loss. If they will but trust him he will bring their best out of them all.

Well, I talked with this forlorn little girl, and I found at last, that, in this world so full of useful and ornamental arts and sciences, there are just two things that she dares to say she can do well. She can make good candy and she can—clean—lamps. Now, Aunt Esther, don't you see the "somewhere" into which I want to fit her?

Her skill in candy making I am going to test myself, and I am anxious to know if you don't want to entrust your lamps—I remember they always smoke, smell, and are generally disagreeable—to her care?

Do try her, Aunt Esther. I am sure you can make her useful, and do her good, and God has thrown her in my way, and I feel responsible for her.

Please answer at once, and let your answer be what I desire.

Affectionately, your niece,

HELEN STANLEY.

Two days later this letter addressed to Mrs. Esther Pennock, Pennock Manor, N. Y., reached its destination; and an hour after its receipt this answer was on its way to Mrs. Stanley:

Pennock Manor, N. Y.

MY DEAR HELEN:—So you have found another incompetent and half-educated girl to feel responsible for, have you?

Well, I am not surprised, for I believe you are always on the lookout for them, and incompetent girls are a good deal like weeds—they are to be found everywhere, and the fact that cultivation would improve them does not make them a whit less trying to our patience.

Under ordinary circumstances I would sooner have my lamps smoke than have my temper irritated—as I am sure it will be—by this helpless and inefficient girl. But you

are as shrewd, my dear Helen, as you are sympathetic. In telling me of this girl you have made me—as you knew you would—a sharer in the responsibility you feel for her.

I do not believe that God leaves anything to chance, or does anything by accident, and so, when he throws the helpless and inefficient in our way, it is my belief—not always, I must confess, an agreeable one—that he means us, according to our ability, to rescue and aid them. So you may send this young girl—you forgot to give me her name—to me, Helen. I hope her two accomplishments, of candy making and lamp cleaning, are symbolical of the sweetness and light in her character, and though I dare say I shall scold her like a shrew, I will try, at the same time, to train her like a good housekeeper, and to care for her like a Christian.

I suppose she is as ignorant of business as she is of work, and if she is, you must tell me what wages she ought to receive. I am willing to pay her generously, but at the same time I wish her to understand, that, in my opinion, only work well-done deserves to be well-paid for; and perhaps it will be well for her to know, also, that it is easier always for me to pardon want of knowledge, than it is for me to tolerate want of conscience.

Good-bye, my dear niece, let me know when to expect my new helper(?). Your affectionate aunt,

ESTHER PENNOCK.

While these letters were passing from and to Mrs. Stanley, Honor was busily and happily employed with her candy. She was very successful in making it, and it was with a good deal of innocent pride that she sent it to Mrs. Stanley. The letter she received in reply made her very happy. Mrs. Stanley paid her gener-

ously for the candy, and when Honor placed the money—the first she had ever earned—in her purse, she felt that though useful work might have its hardships it had also substantial rewards.

But more satisfactory even than the money was the report Mrs. Stanley gave of her correspondence with Mrs. Pennock.

To Honor's great content Mrs. Stanley had made all the necessary arrangements with Mrs. Pennock for her. The salary she was promised was larger than she had dared to hope for, her traveling expenses were to be paid, and Mrs. Stanley suggested that it would be well if she could be at Pennock Manor by the first of August.

The next few days in Honor's life were at once very busy and very sad. For the last time she went through all the rooms in the old house where her childhood and girlhood had passed so happily; for the last time she gathered flowers in the old-fashioned garden, that had always been her delight, and when all her preparations were completed, and the last evening came, she took her seat in the homely old kitchen, where some of her brightest hours had been spent, and laying her head down on the table, sobbed like the lonely and desolate child she truly was. She had no glad anticipations

of the future now; with a feeling akin to terror she clung to Miss Clark and the old life, and the thought that she was going where she would be usefully employed and liberally compensated served only to distress her.

"It seems so like a wretched dream," she said in a voice broken with sobs when Miss Clark tried to comfort her. "Only seven weeks ago we were so happy here with my father, and now all is so changed. O Miss Clark, why must life be made so hard for me, while I am still so young? Why must I be so sad and burdened, while other girls are so glad and free?"

"I don't know, Honor," Miss Clark answered soberly. "God is working out his plans for you in his own way. It ain't your way, and it ain't my way, but it is his way, and so it must be the best way. That is all the answer I can give when you ask me to explain the puzzle of your life to you."

"I suppose it is the only answer," Honor said sadly, "but it doesn't make things any plainer nor any easier to bear. Only think, Miss Clark, to-morrow I am to say good-bye to you, and to every one I have ever known, and I am going"—and the girlish voice sounded a little bitter—"among entire strangers as a—servant. Think of it, Miss Clark."

"I have thought of it, Honor," Miss Clark

answered, "and I am very sorry for you. But"
—with a regretful sigh—"it seems the only
way, and I really thought you wanted to go."

"Of course I want to go, I don't want to starve," Honor returned with some sharpness; "but oh"—and her voice choked again—"you don't know how it hurts me to go. If only"—she ended with a sob—"I knew what was before me I could bear it better."

"No, you couldn't," Miss Clark said wisely. "Even when the way is smoothest, we would never be able to walk it, if we could see each separate step. Now, Honor"—she went on in a cheerful voice—"you must hearten up. It ain't no use to feel afraid of your future. Remember you have only got to live it day by day, and the longest day is only twenty-four hours. You are made of poor stuff if you can't bear trouble for twenty-four hours at a time."

Honor did not speak at once; she sat with her head resting on her hand, and her eyes fastened on the floor. Presently she said, "I cannot help it, Miss Clark, the nearer it comes the harder it seems. Only think of it; a servant, I shan't be anything more in Mrs. Pennock's family than a—servant."

"No, of course you won't be anything else, Honor," Miss Clark said with much composure, "an' I am glad you realize it, for now you won't expect much notice an' attention, an' if you don't expect them you won't make yourself and everybody working with you miserable because you don't get them."

"That's comforting," Honor said bitterly.

"I'm glad if you find it so, but anyway it is the truth," Miss Clark retorted.

Honor drew a long breath, but her thoughts were too bitter to find expression in words, and for a few moments the old kitchen was almost painfully still. Then in an earnest but very gentle voice Miss Clark resumed the conversation.

"Honor," she said, "this is our last night in our old home; you and I may never talk together again, an' now I am just going to give you a last word of advice. You are very proud, and here, in your father's house, you have always been first. Now you have got to take a humble place, and do a servant's work, and, Honor, if you try to fill a humble place with a proud heart you will have a hard time. You will have, I dare say, to eat plenty of humble pie where you are going, and, Honor, you will find it very bitter if you don't sweeten it with humility, and that's what I advise you to do, Honor. Don't pride yourself on your pride, as I have seen some folks do, Honor, but just resolve, since you must be a servant, to be a patient and a willing one, and then you'll be happy. There, I've said my last say, Honor, an' if you ain't the better for it, it will be your own fault. Now bring the Bible, and let us have prayers together for the last time."

With trembling hands Honor brought the Bible from which her father had always read.

"Read the sixth chapter of Matthew," Miss Clark said, and in a low and tremulous voice Honor obeyed.

She read without interruption to the thirty-second verse, but as her voice faltered on the precious words, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things," Miss Clark spoke.

"Stop there," she said, while her own voice, that was usually so calm, trembled with feeling; "stop there, Honor. Let's rest our hearts on those words; they are all we want."

Reverently Honor closed the Bible, and the solemn but sweet silence that followed the reading remained unbroken for many minutes.

The shadows darkened, and the evening deepened into night, and still the two, who through so many years had shared one home, lingered together in the old kitchen. At last, when they knew that they must separate, Honor drew closer to Miss Clark and whispered tremulously, "Pray for me."

Side by side they knelt, and, while memories of the past and fears for the future bowed both their hearts, in a tender and quivering voice Miss Clark prayed:

"Defend, O Lord, this thy child with thy most holy grace; grant that she may continue thine forever; and may all the changes of her life but serve to draw her nearer to thee, and make her more fit for heaven."

"So may it be," Miss Clark whispered—as if to give emphasis to her fervent "Amen"; and with that prayer calming her spirit like a benediction, Honor felt that her life in her old home was ended.

7

CHAPTER VII.

ORDERS AND RECEIPTS.

"Come, rouse thee up, put self aside,
And serve thy God with care:
It may be little thou canst do,
In some small corner hid from view,
But God is with thee there."

FARLY the next morning Honor left Broadfields and a long ride by railroad and
stage brought her late in the evening to her new
home. It was a cloudy night, and the house
looked very dark. She stumbled up the steps
of the piazza, and then discovered that the
front door was standing open, though the hall
was unlighted. Unable to find the bell, she
knocked as loudly as she could, and then stood
in the door-way and waited anxiously for some
one to come to her.

Several minutes passed, and then a dim light appeared at the far end of the hall. It came nearer and Honor saw that it was carried by a neat-looking servant-girl in a white apron and cap.

"Can I see Mrs. Pennock?" Honor asked, as the servant reached the door.

The girl hesitated. "Mrs. Pennock never likes to be disturbed after she goes to her room for the night," she said, "but are you—"

Impatient to gain admittance Honor inter-

rupted the girl's slow speech.

"Didn't Mrs. Pennock expect me?" she asked. "I was to come to-day."

"Oh," the girl said in a relieved tone, "then you are Miss Honor Montgomery. Come in, please. We expected you to-morrow morning," she explained as she led Honor into a little reception-room. "Mrs. Pennock thought you would take the night train from the city; but your room is ready for you, and I will show you to it, or perhaps," the girl added, as she saw from Honor's face that she was very tired, "perhaps you would like to have a cup of tea before going to your room?"

"If it won't be too much trouble," Honor

said wearily.

- "Oh no," the girl said pleasantly, "a little thing like that is no trouble. Sit down here, please—" and she drew forward a large easy chair—" and I will bring your lunch in a few minutes."
- "Will you first tell Mrs. Pennock that I am here?" Honor asked anxiously.
- "It won't make any difference, she won't want to see you before to-morrow morning, but

I will tell her, if you wish me to;" the girl said as she hurried away.

With a long-drawn breath that denoted relief as well as weariness, Honor dropped into the luxurious chair. She was glad that she was not to see Mrs. Pennock that night, and there was a respect in the girl's manner toward her that quieted some of her anxious fears about her position in her new home. After all her forebodings, her first impressions were pleasant ones; and feeling that she had nothing more to fear for that night, she took off her hat and leaning back in her chair closed her eyes and in a few minutes was fast asleep. She did not hear the door open nor know when a slow, soft step crossed the room and stopped beside her chair; and neither did she feel the keen and penetrating scrutiny of two dark eyes, that through gold-rimmed spectacles, studied her face for a few moments. All day she had quivered with nervousness whenever she thought of meeting Mrs. Pennock, but now her slumber was undisturbed by any consciousness of that lady's presence, and Mrs. Pennock watched her with softened eyes that promised well for her future.

"Poor little girl, she is younger than I expected," she said to the servant when she returned with the lunch tray. "Take good care

of her, Norah. It seems a pity to awaken her, but I suppose she ought to have her tea and go to bed." And noiselessly as they had entered the soft steps left the room.

"Well, Aunt Esther, what is your new responsibility like?" asked a pleasant voice, as the gold-rimmed spectacles, in passing, peered in for an instant at the open door of a little study.

"Like other girls; sleepy," was the decided answer.

"Well, what else can you expect, Aunt Esther, when it is almost midnight?"

Aunt Esther's dark eyes smiled through her spectacles, but her voice said testily:

"I don't expect you to ask me any more questions to-night, Nephew Vaughn." And the little old lady, who often tried by the sharpness of her tongue to conceal the real tenderness of her nature, passed on to her own room.

It was some seconds after Mrs. Pennock left the room before even Norah's energetic movements could arouse Honor; and when she did open her eyes, though the lunch before her looked very dainty and tempting, she could not eat it. She drank a few swallows of tea, and then gladly followed Norah to her room. It was a small, but attractive apartment, with furnishings as pretty as they were comfortable. One pleased glance around her Honor did give and then with a brief prayer, full of thanksgiving for the safety and shelter into which the kind hand of her Father in heaven had brought her, she laid her tired head on her pillow, and in another minute was once more asleep.

When she awoke the next morning her room was already bright with the sunshine of a radiant summer day. She looked at her watch, but it had stopped, and a nervous fear that she had over-slept made her spring up and dress without an instant's delay. Then she opened her door and stepped out into the hall. It was a comfort to see Norah with her broom and duster on the stairs.

"Am I very late?" Honor asked, breathlessly.

"No, indeed, Miss," Norah answered, in her cheerful Irish voice. "Mrs. Pennock hasn't gone down yet. Would you like to go to the library, and wait for her?"

"Perhaps that would be best," Honor said, while her heart beat fast as she thought of the interview before her; and without another word she followed Norah to the library.

It was a large room, and yet hardly large enough for its contents. The cases that were built into the sides of the room had over-flowed, and books filled the tables, and were even piled on the floor.

Honor looked around her with pleased but surprised eyes. "I never saw so many books before outside of a bookstore," she said innocently. "Who can read them all?"

"The young master is a great book-worm," Norah answered, with the proud air of one announcing a fact that reflected credit on herself; and then pointing toward a recess, half-hidden by the folds of a heavy curtain, she whispered loudly: "Hu—sh, he's there himself, now."

He? Who? Honor had heard only of Mrs. Pennock; she had overlooked the important fact that possibly there might be other persons in the family; and now too surprised to speak, she stood still near the door, undecided whether to run away or to adhere to her purpose and wait for Mrs. Pennock.

Evidently, however, her uncertainty was not shared by the occupant of the recess, for, reminded by Norah's loud whisper that his presence was known, he at once brushed aside the curtain and came forward.

"Good-morning," he said pleasantly. "Won't you sit down? My aunt, Mrs. Pennock, will be here in a few minutes."

In much confusion, Honor sat down in the

nearest chair, and standing by the table the gentleman arranged some of the papers and magazines that were scattered over it. As he did so he asked, smilingly: "Do you like books?"

"Ye—es, some books," Honor hesitatingly replied.

"But not all? Will you tell me what kind of books have the honor to be liked by you?"

Honor wished she could run away, but not daring to do that, she sat still and answered in a sober voice: "Books I can understand."

"Does that mean that your understanding is limited, or your love for books universal?" the gentleman asked; and though his voice was grave his eyes flashed with amusement. Though she was keenly conscious that she was probably only passing from one inquisitor to another, it was at that moment a great relief to Honor to see an elderly lady enter the room, and to hear the gentleman say: "Good-morning, Aunt Esther."

The old lady nodded to him, but her eyes rested on Honor.

"Good-morning, Honor Montgomery," she said quietly.

Honor's lips stammered an inarticulate reply, and pitying her confusion the old lady said kindly, "Perhaps I am surer of your name than you are of mine. I am Mrs. Pennock, and this "—and she placed her hand lightly on the young man's arm—"is my nephew, Vaughn Royalston, Professor of Natural History in Agassiz College."

"It is a great comfort to be properly introduced," Mr. Royalston said playfully.

Mrs. Pennock did not reply; walking to an easy chair at the head of the library table she seated herself, and then said: "Ring the bell, Honor, and we will have prayers."

Silently Honor obeyed her. Two or three servants came in and Mr. Royalston conducted the morning service of Bible reading and prayer. That service over, breakfast was announced.

"Come with me," Mrs. Pennock said, as she perceived Honor's painful uncertainty; and as they walked toward the dining-room she asked, "Do you know your position in this house?"

"Lamp cleaner," Honor said humbly.

Mrs. Pennock uttered a little impatient exclamation. "Lamp cleaning will be included in your duties," she said, "but I don't expect the smoke and the smell of my lamps to cling to you all the time, and I prefer to ignore them altogether in naming your position. You are understood to be my companion. Now do you know your place? Do you know what a companion's duties are?"

"No," Honor answered truthfully.

"Then you will have to learn," Mrs. Pennock said with sharp decision.

"I will do the best I can," Honor promised meekly.

"Of course, that is expected, and understood," Mrs. Pennock said in a voice that puzzled Honor, for it sounded at once kind and annoyed.

The breakfast, so far as Honor's share in it was concerned, was a very silent meal. With a dread that made her almost faint she drank her coffee, and tried to nerve herself for the examination she supposed she must soon undergo. She wondered what her duties would be, and whether she would be able to perform them. As the minutes went by her embarrassment increased; and when they arose from the table her lips were trembling, and her color coming and going with painful quickness. Two pairs of observant eyes had seen all the changes in the girl's sensitive face, but as soon as the breakfast was over, Mr. Royalston quietly left the room, and with her most matter-of-fact face and voice Mrs. Pennock turned to Honor.

"Honor," she said, as she took a little card from her pocket and handed it to the embarrassed girl, "I do not like to have the people in my house coming to me every hour or two to know what I want them to do. Frequent interruptions are like the briars that tear our clothes—they will make the longest day's work a thing of patches and shreds. As far as possible, I always plan the work for the day in the morning, and you will find the duties I wish you to perform to-day written on this card."

With a sinking heart Honor took the little card. She felt very much as if she were holding a whole law library in her hand. She waited until Mrs. Pennock had left the dining-room, and then summoning all her courage she read her duties.

They were plainly written, and as she looked at the large and legible words, Honor felt that she never could plead that she did not understand what was required of her.

Slowly she read:

"Honor Montgomery's work for the second day of August.

MORNING DUTIES.

1st. Clean the lamps.

2nd. Arrange flowers for the parlor, library, and dining-room.

3rd. Sort and repair linen in the sewing-room.

4th. Make a mayonnaise salad dressing for lunch.

"Which I don't know how to do at all," Honor thought ruefully; but she read on.

AFTERNOON DUTIES.

1st. Make two forms of lemon jelly.

"Another thing I don't know how to do," Honor said in despair. She felt already half inclined to resign her situation as Mrs. Pennock's companion, but with a brave effort she continued to read.

2nd. Make button holes in a flannel wapper you will find in the sewing room.

"Why, I never made a button hole in my life," Honor exclaimed tearfully, as she dropped the card. "What can Mrs. Pennock mean? I told Mrs. Stanley that I did not know how to do any thing, and now Mrs. Pennock expects me to prepare delicate dishes for the table, and do fine sewing. Why, I cannot do it. It is impossible."

For some minutes Honor tried to find comfort in the thought that her duties were impossibilities, but her sober common sense soon reminded her that, no matter how impossible her duties seemed to her, the great fact still remained that Mrs. Pennock considered them possible, and expected them to be performed.

At last, made desperate by the consciousness of her ignorance, and her belief that Mrs.

Pennock had not been correctly informed as to her qualifications, Honor picked up the card and hurried to the library.

Mrs. Pennock sat there knitting tranquilly, but to Honor's consternation, Mr. Royalston was sitting near her reading aloud.

"Well," Mrs. Pennock said, as flushed and almost breathless Honor rushed into the library, "What is the matter? Has a lamp exploded?"

"Mrs. Pennock—" Honor began and then stopped awkwardly, confused by the scrutiny of the keen eyes bent upon her.

"Yes," Mrs. Pennock said quietly, "that is my name. What do you want?"

Honor stood for an instant irresolute, but then she found courage to say, "Mrs. Pennock, I want to speak to you."

"Very well, I know of nothing to prevent. You have got a tongue, and I have got ears."

"But there has been a mistake—I want to explain," Honor stammered.

"Explain then," Mrs. Pennock said calmly.

Honor cast one helpless glance toward Mr. Royalston. It seemed impossible for her to make her humiliating confession of ignorance in his hearing.

Pitying her embarrassment the young man would have left the library, but Mrs. Pennock prevented him.

"Stay here, Vaughn," she ordered. "I want your help."

"To do what, Aunt Esther?" Mr. Royalston asked, as rather unwillingly he resumed his chair.

"I cannot both give and receive explanations at the same time," Mrs. Pennock answered coolly. "Now, Honor, what do you wish to say?"

The choking sensation in Honor's throat was so painful that she almost gasped, but speak she must, and with much difficulty she managed to say, "This card, Mrs. Pennock, it is all wrong."

"All wrong? I wrote it myself, Honor."

"I mean—" Honor stammered—" I mean the duties, I told Mrs. Stanley; I thought she understood; I didn't mean to deceive; I don't know how to do them."

"Mrs. Stanley wrote me you were a little ignoramus—if that is what you mean—" Mrs. Pennock replied with great composure, "but I did not suppose you wanted to remain one. Let me have that card."

With a quick, suppressed sound, suspiciously like a sob, Honor handed her the card, and adjusting her spectacles Mrs. Pennock read it.

"You do consider yourself capable of doing

that I believe?" And with eyes as bright and sharp as her knitting needles Mrs. Pennock looked at the troubled girl.

"Yes," Honor humbly admitted, "but that was all I said I could do."

Mrs. Pennock frowned. "Could is in the past tense, we are considering what you can and will do in the present," she said as she glanced again at the card. "Second, arrange flowers—if you can't do that you are truly to be pitied.—Next, you are to sort and mend linen. Is that duty beyond your powers of performance?"

"I think I can do the sorting, I am not sure about the mending," Honor said, hesitatingly.

"If you are not, you ought to be. Well, next you are to make a mayonnaise dressing. Pray is that an impossibility?"

"I-I-don't know how," Honor confessed.

"And you never heard of such a thing as a receipt-book, I suppose. What do you think they are for, if not to teach just such ignorant girls as you are?"

"I didn't think of a receipt-book," Honor said while her face burned with mortification.

"Then you have got to learn to think. When you don't know how to do a thing your first duty is to think where you can learn to do it," Mrs. Pennock said severely. "Let me see,

next you are to make jelly. What is the trouble about that?"

"I don't know how," Honor confessed again.

"Then study the receipt-book again. Next, you are to make button-holes. That is work with the needle that every woman ought to be expert in. Why do you object to it?"

"I never made a button-hole in my life," Honor stammered.

"I supposed so. You are certainly consistent in your ignorance. Well, because you never have made a button-hole do you think it follows that you never should make one. You have got to learn, that is all."

"But I am afraid I'll spoil the wrapper," Honor said feebly.

"Then practice first on a piece of old cloth. Now understand, Honor," Mrs. Pennock said, in a serious but not unkind voice, as she gave the card back to the tearful girl, "understand that every duty named on this card I expect you to perform to-day, except working the button-holes in the wrapper—you will make them in old cloth to-day, to-morrow you can make them in the wrapper. There are several receipt-books on the shelf in the dining-room closet. Take Mrs. Henderson's, and learn from that how to make the dressing and the jelly. Norah, and Maggie, the cook, will show you

where to find everything you need to use. I know you are to-day a very ignorant and incompetent young girl, but you are capable, I hope, of becoming intelligent and competent, and what you are capable of being you must be. Now go, and to the best of your ability perform your duties."

With a scarlet face and tearful eyes Honor hurried from the library. As soon as she had closed the door, Mr. Royalston, who had been apparently blind and deaf to everything but his book, turned to his aunt.

- "Aunt Esther," he said, earnestly, "how could you be so hard with that poor girl?"
- "Just because she is a poor girl," Mrs. Pennock returned.
- "What?" Mr. Royalston exclaimed, while he looked in blank amazement at his aunt.
- "I don't mean because she is poor, in the sense of having no money," Mrs. Pennock condescended to explain, "but I mean because she is poor, in the sense of being ignorant, inefficient, and sadly incapable of taking care of herself. I consented to receive her into my family because it seemed my duty to do so, and now I mean to do my duty by her."
- "I am afraid you will make her very unhappy," Mr. Royalston said soberly.
 - "You may dismiss your fears. I wrote to

Helen that I should scold her like a shrew—" and Mrs. Pennock gave a soft and mellow laugh as she spoke—" but I have no intention of causing her one thrill of unhappinesss that will not help to make her a better and happier woman in the future. You heard the duties I require of her to-day, Vaughn. They are duties that every young lady, no matter what her position may be, ought to be able to perform. To-morrow morning I shall give her another card, with different duties. I shall not pet her ignorance, but neither shall I break her heart. You may trust me."

"I hope so," and Mr. Royalston looked smilingly at his aunt, "but were you not unnecessarily severe with her to-day? Why did you insist on my remaining when my presence only added to her confusion?"

"Perhaps I was a little hard there," Mrs. Pennock acknowledged. "But I have already discovered that my little lady is very proud. Her mortification at having to confess her ignorance before you will be a great spur to her efforts to remedy her defects. She will not tell me again that she does not know how to do a thing, until she has tried faithfully to learn how, to do it."

Mr. Royalston shook his head. "I never suspected that you were such a rigid disciplina-

rian, Aunt Esther," he said gravely, "and though I dare say you are right, in theory at least, I cannot help pitying your pupil. Poor little girl, I wonder how she will get through this first day."

Mrs. Pennock knitted away with great composure. "She will know more to-night than she knew this morning," she said. "Now go on with your reading, Vaughn, I want you to finish that book before you leave to-morrow."

In after years, when Honor reviewed her life, she used to say playfully that Mrs. Pennock was the best teacher she ever had. But when she left the library that morning she was disposed to take a very dark view of her circumstances and life, and for a little while she felt very miserable and friendless. But though must is a hard word, it is also a very helpful word. The task that we know we must do, we can always nerve ourselves, at least, to attempt. And Honor, after a hearty cry in her room, went courageously about her duties, and performed them better than Mrs. Pennock had anticipated. The card next morning assigned her new tasks, and sent her again to the cook-book. And for several weeks, between practising with her needle and experimenting with receipts, Honor was kept very busy.

By degrees she began to find positive pleas-

ure in her new life—it was a very quiet life. Mr. Royalston had gone, and often for days the family in the old manor house consisted only of Mrs. Pennock, and herself, and the servants. Once such a retired life would have seemed almost unendurable to Honor, but now her constant occupation kept her contented and cheerful. It was pleasant to know that she was improving and learning something useful each day; and she soon began to feel a pardonable pride in her knowledge of household arts.

But growth in our nature is not meant to be a one-sided affair; and now, as Honor advanced in her knowledge of cooking and needlework, she became increasingly conscious of her deficiencies in book knowledge; and she began to desire more earnestly than ever before in her life to become truly a well-educated woman. Before her first autumn in Pennock Manor expired, Honor began seriously to question, if it was not her right and her duty to aim to make something more of herself than even a good housekeeper and a skillful seamstress.

One day in the library she took up a book that Mrs. Pennock had left open at an essay with this suggestive title:

"Concerning People of Whom More Might Have Been Made:" Attracted by the subject, Honor began to read the essay, but the gentle pessimism of the author was not pleasing to her young and hopeful mind, and when she read:

"'More might have been, made of all of us, probably in the case of most, not much more will be made in this world," she dropped the book with a thrill of positive fear.

Was that all that life amounted to? she asked herself. Were advancement and growth quite impossible for all but a favored few? Was there to be no going on, and going higher for herself?

There should be, Honor almost fiercely resolved. From that very hour she would begin to make the most of herself.

Urged on by that resolve, Honor hastened to her room. Out from the depths of her trunk—where she had packed them more for the sake of old associations, than from any intention of ever reviewing them—she took her old schoolbooks, and with a firm determination to master them, began to study.

The next morning when Mrs. Pennock in going about the house, as was her custom each day, entered Honor's room, she noticed the pile of books on a little table near the window. As she stooped to examine them her face was a study.

"Ah," she said in a curious voice, "so there

is growth in more directions than one is there? Well, a skylark always will soar no matter how hard you try to make a ground bird of it—but we will wait awhile, and make sure that there is perseverance as well as ambition here, and if there is we—will see——"

CHAPTER VIII.

NOT HERSELF.

"Alas, this peevishness with good Is want of faith in God, Unloving thoughts within distort The look of things abroad."

—Faber.

BETWEEN the duties Mrs. Pennock required of her, and the tasks she unsparingly imposed on herself, Honor's days were now fully occupied. Though Mrs. Pennock, for some reason she did not care to explain, was gradually lessening her duties, she still gave her a little card each morning; and Honor found herself no longer dreading it, but watching for it with positive pleasure. Something new was usually asked of her, and to conquer her difficulties was now a keen delight to the girl. Hither and thither about the house she went with light feet and willing hands until her morning's work was done; then she would seek her room, and through the quiet afternoons, that Mrs. Pennock never allowed to be interrupted now, she would devote herself to her books. As the weeks and months went by Mrs. Pennock (119)

watched her with an interest that steadily increased; and Honor, conscious that even her sharpest reproofs were the reproofs of a true and wise friend, was happy and contented with her.

So a quiet winter glided into a sunshiny spring, and that, in turn, gave place to a radiant summer, and summer, in due time, made way for the golden skies and russet tints of autumn, and still Honor's life continued to pass happily in Pennock Manor.

In those long months there had been but few visitors at the manor house, and only once had Mrs. Pennock varied the monotony of her life by going to the city for a few days; then she took Honor with her, and the museums and picture galleries the girl visited there sent her back with new zest to her books and studies.

Through these quiet months Mr. Royalston, who had left Pennock Manor the day after Honor arrived there, had been in Europe, and Honor had almost forgotten his existence, when one bright October morning, as she folded the letter she had been reading, Mrs. Pennock said in a happy voice," Mr. Royalston will be here to-night, Honor."

"Oh dear." That little exclamation was uttered involuntarily, and the next instant Honor bit her lip in vexation. Mrs. Pennock looked at her with an amused smile. "I am sorry you do not find my information pleasant, Honor," she said; "will you be any better pleased when I tell you that my nephew does not come alone?"

"I ought to be pleased with everything that gives you pleasure, Mrs. Pennock," Honor said, in a voice that plainly indicated that what the girl felt she ought to be, she was not.

"Well," Mrs. Pennock said, "I don't demand impossibilities, Honor, but I should like to know why you are sorry to have Vaughn Royalston come home."

"I am only sorry to have our quiet life changed," Honor confessed ingenuously.

"Oh, is that the reason? well, as Vaughn neither drums, nor talks loud enough for the man in the moon to hear him, I don't think your quiet will be seriously disturbed. I suppose though, while our visitors are here, there will be a little life in this sleepy old house."

"Visitors," Honor repeated.

"Yes, didn't I tell you Vaughn was not coming alone? My niece, Janet Howard, and a young friend of hers, Ethel Clinton, are coming with him."

Honor sat back in her chair and looked at Mrs. Pennock with wide open eyes. "Why," she exclaimed, "I used to know a Janet Howard and an Ethel Clinton. They were my schoolmates at Cedar Grove Seminary."

"Then you probably know the Janet Howard and the Ethel Clinton who are coming here," Mrs. Pennock replied, "for they were at Cedar Grove Seminary two years ago."

"I was there then," Honor said; and her cheeks flushed, and her eyes were bright with pleasant anticipations as she added, "I shall be glad to see Janet and Ethel. I have not met one of my schoolmates since I left the seminary."

"School-girl friendships are very pleasantwhile they last," Mrs. Pennock said with a note of sadness in her voice, caused, perhaps, by memories of her own young life. But Honor had no sad memories of her school-days, and it was with a pleasure that increased as the hours went by that she thought of the coming guests.

She had felt at first—as she said to Mrs. Pennock-very sorry to have their quiet life changed; but she was young, warm-hearted, and naturally fond of society, and the thought that for at least one long month two young girls, who were once her schoolmates, were to be with her in that quiet house made her heart throb with joy. What delightful talks, what hours of pleasant intercourse they would have

together! More than once that day Mrs. Pennock heard, what was an unusual sound in her quiet house, the sweet notes of Honor's voice as she went singing about her duties.

As the day advanced, Honor counted the hours and half-hours that must pass before their welcome visitors would arrive; and it was with a bright face, as the shadows of twilight gathered, that she lighted the lamps about the house, and then slipped into the library, and stirred the oak logs smouldering in the fireplace, until with a great shower of sparks the ruddy flames went leaping up the chimney.

"There," Honor said in a satisfied tone, "this is a pleasant fire. I do hope the people who are to sit by it will be pleasant too."

"I can promise that one of them will at least try to be pleasant," said a voice behind her. And turning quickly she saw Mr. Royalston standing in the doorway.

"Why," Honor exclaimed in surprise, as she advanced to meet him, "I did not know you had arrived."

"Your ignorance is pardonable," Mr. Royalston replied quietly, "for we have but this minute entered the house."

We? Honor's eyes passed Mr. Royalston and looked eagerly out into the hall.

"Are you looking for my companions?" Mr.

Royalston asked, with a little amusement in his tone. "They are with my aunt. I came in here to say, how do you do, to my books. Always after an absence I am uneasy until I have looked at them."

"They have been handled very little since you left them," Honor said in a matter-of-fact voice.

"Not, I hope, because you could not find among them some book you could understand," he answered in playful allusion to their first conversation. "Have you had a pleasant year, have you been well?" he asked more gravely.

"Yes, both," Honor replied as she walked to the door. "Excuse me," she said then, "I must find Mrs. Pennock."

"You will not have to look far," Mrs. Pennock's voice answered, "for we are close by. Now Janet, and Ethel," she said as she entered the library with the two young girls, "here is a new and yet an old friend for you. Do you know her?"

Two pairs of bright young eyes looked curiously at Honor for an instant, and then two gay young voices cried, "Why it is, Honor, Honor Montgomery," and for a few moments there was a pleasant hubbub of girlish chatter and laughter, while Mrs. Pennock and Mr. Royalston looked on with smiling faces.

"Isn't it strange," Janet said presently, "that we should meet here, Honor? Have you been here long, are you visiting Aunt Esther too?"

That question suddenly recalled to Honor's recollection some facts she had well-nigh forgotten. For months she had been too busy and contented in Mrs. Pennock's home to be troubled by any proud thoughts about her position there. But now, as she looked at her school-mates, she wondered, with a little pang of pride, if it would make any difference in their regard for her when they knew that she was not Mrs. Pennock's visitor but really her servant. She was conscious of a secret unwillingness to answer Janet's question; but no one spoke, all seemed to be waiting for her answer, and after a moment's silence she said, in a voice that had lost a little of its vivacity:

"No, I am not visiting Mrs. Pennock. I am working for her. Shall I show you your room?"

"Oh." It would be hard for a long sentence containing many words to express all that that little interjection signified as it fell from Janet's lips.

Honor's face flushed as she heard it. "Shall I show you your room?" she asked again as she turned toward the door.

"Yes, go to your room," Mrs. Pennock or-

dered; and in evident confusion the two girls followed Honor. "How did she come here?" Ethel whispered to Janet.

"I cannot imagine," Janet answered. "It is a mystery to me."

Honor heard both the question and answer. "It is a mystery easily explained," she said as she led the girls into the beautiful room that with many bright anticipations she had herself prepared for them. "My father died sixteen months ago, and I was left poor. It was necessary for me to support myself and Mrs. Pennock hired me. I have been with her fourteen months."

Honor spoke in a low but calm voice, and the girls who listened to her, little suspected how much her explanation cost her. They looked at her a moment, too surprised, perhaps, to speak, and then Janet said:

"It is too bad, isn't it, Ethel?"

"Yes, I am very sorry for you, Honor," Ethel said; and then for another minute the three girls were silent.

Janet was the first to break the disagreeable silence. "Honor," she said in a nervous voice, "are you really here as a—servant? What do you do?"

"Whatever Mrs. Pennock orders me to do," Honor replied. "Yes, I am really here as a

servant," she added with a little emphasis, for her pride was rising.

"I am sorry for you," Janet said in a tone that indicated little real interest; and then as Honor opened the door she exclaimed, "Oh Honor, if you are going down stairs, won't you see if our trunks have come?"

It was a simple thing to ask. Janet might have made the same request of Ethel had she been going down stairs, but in her indifferent tone and manner there was something implied that stung and embittered Honor.

"I am not her servant, if I am Mrs. Pennock's," she said angrily to herself; and when a little later she met the girls in the dining-room all the pleasant friendliness of manner with which she had greeted them at first had passed away. She made no attempt to join in the lively conversation at the dinner table, but with flushed cheeks and flashing eyes she filled her place and performed the little duties that devolved upon her. All the while proud and angry thoughts were rising in her heart, and once when Ethel-who at school had cared little for either reading or study—asked, "Mr. Royalston, don't you after talking with common people often find it a great relief to take up a good book?" Honor's lip curled scornfully.

She is only talking for effect, she thought bit-

terly. And with that unlovely thought making her face look hard and scornful she turned and met Mr. Royalston's eyes gravely watching her.

Her own eyes fell, and turning to Ethel, Mr. Royalston said quietly, "You will have to tell me what you mean by common people before I can answer your question, Miss Ethel."

"Oh, I mean commonplace, ordinary people; people who are of no account, you know," Ethel explained with a nervous little laugh.

"People of no account," Mr. Royalston said soberly. "I do not know any such people, Miss Ethel. Remember there is not a soul in this world that is not of value in God's sight, and if I am a Christian can there be any people of no account in mine?"

"Don't preach a sermon, Cousin Vaughn," Janet said as she came to Ethel's assistance. "You know well enough that Ethel did not mean anything as serious as your answer would imply. She only meant that there are a great many ordinary, uninteresting people in the world, for whom you cannot help feeling contempt—sometimes at least."

"I am by no means sure that you have bettered matters by your explanation, Janet," Mr. Royalston said with a grave smile. "Perhaps there are people whom we are sometimes, in certain unlovely states of mind, tempted to look

upon with scorn; but that does not prove that they are commonplace; it only proves that we are bitter and uncharitable. When there is love in our hearts we never scorn any one; and we never curl our lips at another's folly without betraying our own unloveliness."

As Mr. Royalston spoke his eyes for an instant rested upon Honor. She felt humiliated and ashamed, and for the next few minutes she was too absorbed in her own thoughts to hear what her companions were saying. Presently she was aroused by Mr. Royalston, who was serving the salad.

"Miss Montgomery," he said playfully, "is this dressing made by Mrs. Henderson's receipt? it is very fine."

"Well," Janet exclaimed, "I never knew before that you were interested in receipt books, Cousin Vaughn."

"That only proves that, notwithstanding our long acquaintance, you do not know me very well," Mr. Royalston replied. "I am particularly interested in Mrs. Henderson's cookbook, and I have wondered for some time if her receipts for mayonnaise dressing and lemon jelly were reliable. Have you found them so?" And Mr. Royalston looked smilingly at Honor.

"No—Yes—I believe so," Honor answered awkwardly.

Ethel laughed. "That sounds like some of the answers you used to give in the schoolroom, Honor," she said, with a hint of sarcasm in her voice.

There was a dangerous flash in Honor's eyes as she looked at Ethel. "You have a good memory," she said, "but you probably remember my answers because your own were so often copies of them."

Ethel's face crimsoned; there was too much truth in Honor's cutting words for her to deny them, but Janet said promptly:

"I am sure of one thing, Honor, Ethel never copied your answers when she wanted to be courteous and kind."

There was surprise and annoyance in Mrs. Pennock's face as she looked soberly from one to the other of the three girls. She was puzzled to understand the change in their behavior, but Mr. Royalston, who understood and regretted it, now said pleasantly:

"Speaking of memories, do you young ladies remember why, in the old fairy story, Princess Golden Memory was so named?"

"I don't think we ever made the acquaintance of that princess," Ethel answered.

"No? Then you have missed a rare pleasure. She was called Princess Golden Memory because she remembered nothing of others

that was not kind and pleasant," and as he spoke Mr. Royalston once more looked soberly at Honor. She felt reproved, but her pride was fully aroused now and she answered bitterly:

"The princess must have forgotten a great deal more than she remembered then."

Mrs. Pennock looked at her reprovingly. "I hope you are not speaking from your own experience, Honor," she said. "I trust you have more kind than unkind things to remember of the people you have known."

As Mrs. Pennock spoke there rushed into Honor's mind, memories of Miss Clark, and Mr. Winthrop, and Mrs. Stanley, and of many others from whom she had received much unselfish and thoughtful kindness, and ashamed of a speech that was not only bitter but ungrateful, she silently resolved to watch her words and conquer her angry feelings.

But resolutions made in our own strength, yield to the slightest temptation, as the withered leaves fall from the trees in autumn if a passing sigh but stirs them, and when the next morning Honor received her card from Mrs. Pennock she was again tried and again she failed.

"What is that?" Janet asked rather saucily, as she saw Honor receive and read the little

card. "Aunt Esther seldom writes to her absent friends. Does she write to you, who live in the same house with her? Really, Honor, I think I shall begin to be jealous of you."

"Better wait until you have cause for jealousy," Honor answered. "This card contains

my duties for to-day."

"What are they," Ethel cried eagerly. "I am so curious to know what you have to do, Honor. Do let me read that card."

"Read it aloud," Janet suggested.

Honor looked up. Mrs. Pennock had left the dining-room, and though Mr. Royalston still lingered at the table he was absorbed in his paper; she conquered the resentful feeling that made her cheeks burn, and said calmly, "Very well, if it will give you pleasure to hear it, I will read it."

"Do so," Janet said. And in a low but distinct voice Honor read:

HONOR MONTGOMERY, DUTIES FOR WEDNESDAY, OCT. 10TH.

1st. Attend to the lamps.

2nd. Make a prune pudding for dinner.

3rd. Make sponge cake for tea.

4th. Seal up the grape jelly made yesterday.

5th. Hang the curtains in the parlor.

6th. Cut out and baste a chintz covering for my easy chair.

"Well," Janet said, as Honor finished reading "your duties take you up-stairs, down-stairs, and into the lady's chamber, don't they, Honor? Does Aunt Esther change your duties every day?"

"Yes," Honor said shortly.

"And you like it, I suppose?" Janet said in a sarcastic voice.

"I don't dislike it," Honor replied.

"Well," Ethel said, while she glanced cautiously at Mr. Royalston, who still appeared engrossed with his paper, "I suppose what one cannot help one must make the best of, but I don't understand, Honor, why you had to become a—a—servant. You might have done something else—something not quite so menial as house work," she explained with a flurried little laugh. "Now there is teaching, Honor, why didn't you teach?"

If the flash in Honor's eyes had been fire it would have annihilated Ethel. She was in no mood to believe Ethel's question prompted by kind interest. Her pride was ready to see an intentional slight or insult in everything her old schoolmates said, and with a scornful curl of her lip she said:

"The reason that prevented my teaching would probably prevent your doing so, if you were to become poor."

Ethel understood Honor's bitter speech: she had no answer ready, but Janet retorted:

"It must be a great satisfaction to you, Honor, to imagine others as ignorant as yourself."

"Unfortunately, imagination has nothing to do in this case, Janet," Honor said in a voice sharp with anger. "I know that others——" and she placed a scornful emphasis on that last word—" are not only my equals in ignorance, but even surpass me."

Before either Janet or Ethel could reply to Honor, Mr. Royalston threw aside his paper and approached the young girls.

"Janet and Miss Ethel," he said, "will you take a walk with me this morning?"

His voice was so grave that his request sounded very much like a command, and as Honor glanced at him she felt intuitively that he had overheard all that had passed between the girls and herself. If he had heard, then she knew that he must disapprove of her cutting speeches, and with a feeling of intense mortification she went about her morning tasks. She passed a miserable day, and when the twilight came and she left her room to join the family in the library her face looked gloomy and unhappy.

It was her duty to light the lamps about the house, and as she stood in the hall, near the open library door, she heard Mrs. Pennock say,

"Honor is late about lighting the lamps, but she has not seemed like herself to-day. I wonder what is the matter with her?"

"I am glad you say she has not seemed like herself," Mr. Royalston replied; "for, in my opinion, the self she has exhibited to-day has been a most unlovely one."

"I am afraid Janet and Ethel have annoyed

her," Mrs. Pennock said gently.

"Well," Mr. Royalston answered, "girls are curious creatures, Aunt Esther, and to give good reasons for their actions is often as hard as it is to read Egyptian hieroglyphics. I do not defend Janet and Miss Ethel, but I think Miss Montgomery has manifested to-day a pride and bitterness in her speech and manners that would alienate her warmest friends."

"Poor child," Mrs. Pennock said compassionately, "I am afraid she has been both disappointed and pained to-day. We must be patient with her, Vaughn, for she is very proud."

"You are asking a good deal when you ask me to be patient with pride," Mr. Royalston replied; "for from my study of human nature, I have learned that pride and scorn in the heart are like rank weeds in a garden; they only need to be cherished to destroy the fairest character."

Though Honor could not well avoid hearing that conversation—for it drifted to her through the open door while she was lighting the hall lamp—yet she certainly verified the old maxim that listeners never hear any good of themselves. If Mr. Royalston's words had been arrows shot at her, they could not have hurt her more. It seemed impossible for a few moments for her to go on with her work; but duty is imperative, and so, because she felt that she must, Honor forced herself to enter the library and light the lamps there.

Her hands trembled violently, and as she was removing one of the handsome shades it fell and covered the table with pieces of broken glass.

"Oh dear," she cried hopelessly, "everything goes wrong to-day."

"Because you are wrong yourself, I fear, Honor," Mrs. Pennock said in a tone of grave reproof.

"A broken lamp shade is not of much consequence," Mr. Royalston said kindly.

Honor turned with a frown. "I don't want to be pitied," she said, while she trembled with anger.

Mr. Royalston looked at the excited girl for a second, and then turned silently away, but Mrs. Pennock said sternly:

"I think you want to find the better self

I advise you to go to your room. I will excuse you from further attendance on me to-night."

Stung by Mrs. Pennock's dismissal, without a word Honor left the library, and hastened to her own room. It was a dark and chilly autumn evening, and she had neither light nor fire, but she did not miss them. She sat down on a low bench, and laying her head in a cushioned chair, let all her angry and bitter feelings find relief in a burst of passionate tears. What was the matter with her? what during the last twenty-four hours had made her so unlike herself, so resentful and so ready to take and to give offense?

She was not used to self-analysis, and at first it was quite impossible for her to understand herself, or explain her state of mind. She only knew that she was disappointed in her schoolmates, and that she felt slighted, and hurt, humiliated, and angry. But by degrees, as her tears ceased and she grew calmer, she began to see herself in a light that was as truthful as it was unlovely. She had felt and manifested bitter pride and scorn in both her looks and words, and in twenty-four hours there had been scarcely one minute in which her thoughts of others had been pleasant and kind.

And why? She shrank from answering that question, but she forced herself to do so.

Simply, her conscience whispered, because two young and thoughtless girls had treated her with indifference. They had hurt and disappointed her; they had shown little sympathy for her troubles, and they had—or at least she had chosen to fancy so—shown her plainly that in her present position they no longer regarded her as an equal.

To see ourselves—not only as others see us, but as we really are—may be a salutary experience, but it is often times a most painful one; and as Honor remembered all her angry words, and angrier thoughts, and recalled Mr. Royalston's stern criticism, her tears flowed afresh.

"Oh," she moaned, "it was all my pride, my ugly pride that made me speak so—but how can I help feeling proud; how can I bear to go on living here, with Janet and Ethel, as a—servant." As she asked herself that last question Honor fairly quivered with passion.

Suddenly, in that strange way in which, long after they have been spoken, tones and words sometimes return to us, Honor seemed to hear Miss Clark saying: "If you try to fill a humble place with a proud heart, Honor, you will have a hard time."

"Well," the girl said, rebelliously, "I am

proud, and I am having a hard time, and how am I to help it?"

No one answered that question, but even as she asked it Honor's head sank deeper in her cushion; for some subtle association recalled just then memories of the fair June morning when her head had rested for the last time beside her father's, and his tender voice had said: "Be a good girl, my darling, and ask God to help you."

Ah, was that the secret cause of all this unexpected trouble, that she had forgotten to pray to him who is an ever-present help in time of trouble?

Swiftly, like the waters of an incoming tide, there rushed over Honor now memories of her life since the June evening when on the old door-step she had pledged herself to be a Christian. Had she kept her pledge? No, in a sorrow and humiliation of heart that swallowed up all her pride and resentment, Honor had to confess that she had not.

Her experience was but a type of the experience of very many of God's wayward children. Before she left her old home, while she had been troubled and uncertain about her future, she had prayed for help and she had read her Bible.

But after she came to Pennock Manor, and after all the difficulties in her path were merci-

fully cleared away, she ceased to feel the need of her heavenly Father's help.

In her own strength she had performed her daily tasks; a few sentences, hastily uttered at night just before she laid her head upon her pillow, had satisfied her conscience about prayer, and in her anxiety to read and study other books, her Bible, except for a chapter on Sunday, had not been opened in weeks.

Now the inevitable failure that follows such a course had overtaken her, and she felt condemned and crushed.

Hours passed; she heard the family come upstairs, she heard their laughing "Good-nights" as they separated, and she seemed to feel the hush that settled down over the old house as its inmates fell asleep; and still she lay there, with her head in the cushioned chair, and struggled with her pride and passion. At last, just as the old clock in the hall struck twelve, she arose, and lighting her lamp took up her Bible. She turned over a few pages, and then prompted by some impulse she could neither resist nor define, she looked at the fly leaf. Her father had written her name there on her seventeenth birthday, two years before, and beneath her name was written the tender entreaty with which in Jeremiah the Lord implores his wandering children to return unto him"Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?"

As she read those words Honor's pride yielded. It was that Father and that Guide she needed now. Humbled and penitent, like a child who after vainly trying to walk alone submissively clasps its parent's hand, she knelt and gave herself anew to her heavenly Father.

It was early morning when at last with a pale face but a peaceful heart she closed the vigil of that eventful night. She was not made suddenly perfect; many a weary struggle, many a dark hour of pain and conflict lay before her in the shadowy future, but like the pilgrim of old, after wandering in by-path meadow, she had come back to the king's highway; and from that hour, though her steps were often faltering and slow, she walked surely onward to the Father's home.

CHAPTER IX.

TRYING TO PLEASE.

"Shine on; nor heed
Whether the object by reflected light
Return thy radiance or absorb it quite.
And though thou notest, from thy safe retreat,
Old friends burn dim, like lamps in noisome air,
Love them for what they are, nor love them less,
Because, to thee, they are not what they were."
—Coleridge.

THOUGH it is an easy matter, when we yield to pride and resentment, to raise barriers between our associates and ourselves, it is a bitter truth that it is oftentimes an extremely difficult matter to sweep away those barriers.

Sharp words can in a moment do a work of alienation that days of patient endeavor will scarcely avail to undo; and this painful lesson Honor was compelled to learn now.

The foolish pride that she had shown, at little acts that—whether designed or unintentional—were unworthy of her notice, had awakened Janet's and Ethel's pride, and the resentment she had manifested had aroused resentment in their hearts.

Their foolish prejudices about her position in (142)

Mrs. Pennock's household would have been conquered soon had she been true to herself and treated them with the pleasant friendliness of their schooldays. But now they not only regarded her as socially their inferior, but they disliked her for her stinging and sarcastic words; and for days they treated her with a haughty coldness that not only humiliated but deeply pained her.

She had also to accept the sorrowful truth that she had forfeited Mr. Royalston's esteem. He offered her neither pity nor friendship now, but treated her with a polite reserve that made her realize keenly how much she had injured herself in his eyes by her unlovely words and behavior.

Mrs. Pennock continued to give her a card each morning, but when her light tasks were performed she was free to follow her own inclinations, and Honor withdrew as much as possible from the family, and tried to find in her books the pleasant interest and companionship that—because of her own folly—she could not find in her associates.

It was a painful time, but though she often felt lonely and sorrowful, Honor's prayers and resolves were beginning now to influence her character and conduct, and whenever she was with Janet and Ethel—though their treatment of her was often unkind, she showed neither pride nor resentment, for she felt neither.

So the days went by, until one lovely morning in late October Mr. Royalston said at the breakfast table: "This is just the day for a long drive. Miss Ethel and Janet, how would you like to go to Maspeth?"

Maspeth was the name of Mr. Royalston's old home. It was a charming but out-of-the-way estate that had been deeded by the Indians, for "as long as winds should blow and waters flow," to Mr. Royalston's ancestors; and it had descended from father to son, through the sure changes of the long slow years, until at last it fell to Mr. Royalston as the last representative of his family.

It was twelve miles from Pennock Manor, but the road leading to it was a very beautiful one; and now at his question Janet and Ethel clapped their hands.

"There isn't a thing in the world we would rather do," Ethel said gayly.

"Then it is the one thing we will do," Mr. Royalston answered. "We will start in an hour, take our lunch, and have a long day at the old home. And now how many will go? The wagon will carry four, and a vacant seat in a carriage on a pleasure trip always looks sel-

fish to me; so we must have that fourth seat occupied."

Janet and Ethel turned quickly to Mrs. Pennock. "You will go, won't you, Aunt Esther?" they coaxed.

"No, thank you," Mrs. Pennock said. "I am too old to enjoy jolting for twelve miles over a rough road in pursuit of pleasure."

Janet looked at Mr. Royalston. "You will have to pick up some weary pedestrian along the way, Vaughn," she said.

"If we cannot do better," Mr. Royalston answered. "Perhaps," and he looked at Honor, "Miss Montgomery would enjoy the ride."

Honor's face brightened, for she was very fond of driving. "Thank you, I should enjoy it very much," she said impulsively, but even as she spoke she heard a low but expressive, "Oh dear," from Janet.

Hastily she raised her cup of coffee to her lips, and with the coffee she swallowed a pang of keen regret; then with a sobered face she looked at Mr. Royalston, and said, "I forgot. My duties always keep me at home in the morning."

"And they cannot be set aside even for a pleasure excursion?" Mr. Royalston asked kindly.

Honor shook her head. "I think not," she

said, and turning to Mrs. Pennock she extended her hand.

"May I have my card?" she asked with a faint smile.

Mr. Royalston looked at her for an instant. He had caught Janet's little exclamation, and he had noticed the shadow that saddened Honor's face. He was quick to observe; to draw his own deductions, and to come to decisions. Honor's struggles and victories during the past few days had not been altogether unperceived, and now he turned to Mrs. Pennock.

"Aunt Esther," he said, "I think you must be the judge here. Has Miss Montgomery any duties to-day of such importance that she cannot accompany us on this drive? Stop," he ordered playfully, as he saw that Honor was about to speak, "as there can be no appeal from the judge's decision, there must be no attempt to influence it. Now, Aunt Esther, decide."

Mrs. Pennock looked at the little card in her hand. "Has any one a pencil?" she asked.

"Here," Mr. Royalston said, as he handed her his pencil, "I always try to be ready for an emergency."

Mrs. Pennock looked at Honor's crimson and sad face for a moment; then she drew a mark across the words already written on the card,

turned it, wrote a few words, and handed it to Honor.

"Here," she said kindly, but with a peculiar emphasis, "I shall be satisfied if you perform these duties well to-day, Honor."

Honor looked at the card. It was written with the usual formality and read:

HONOR MONTGOMERY, DUTIES FOR OCTOBER 25TH.

1st. She will go to Maspeth.

2nd. She will be as pleasant as it is in her power to be.

3rd. She will give all the pleasure to others that she is able to give.

4th. She will accept all the pleasure that others try to give her.

5th. She will believe that her pleasure is desired.

6th. She will suspect no slights.

"Well," Mr. Royalston asked, after waiting a moment for Honor to look up and speak, "is it decided, Miss Montgomery, has the judge been merciful?"

Honor could not answer. The reproof, so skillfully administered, almost unnerved her, and the saddest part of the reproof was that she had to acknowledge to herself that she had merited it. It seemed to her that she never could look up and speak again, but when Janet asked impatiently, "Why don't you speak, Honor, are you going?" she forced herself to answer, "Yes—I believe so—though—" and

now she looked imploringly at Mrs. Pennock, "I think it would be better for me to stay at home."

"Nonsense," Mrs. Pennock said briskly, "a girl who hasn't spirit enough to enjoy a drive this lovely day is too dull to be allowed to stay at home. Go and get ready."

"Wait a minute," Mrs. Pennock ordered as Honor started to obey her, "you must see about the lunch, Honor. You can take anything you like. Maggie will help you prepare it."

With a quiet "Very well," Honor proceeded to the kitchen. Maggie the cook was very ready to assist her, and tongue-sandwiches, and hard boiled eggs, olives, jelly, and cake were quickly gathered together.

"Now is there anything else we can take?"
Honor asked doubtfully as she began to pack
her basket.

"Wall, an' shure," Maggie answered, "ye can't have chickens—there ain't no time to prepare them. But, Miss Honor darlint, we have some of the beautifulest oysters. Now how would ye like them?"

"Raw?" Honor said dubiously.

"Wall, and shure," Maggie replied, "there's plenty as would like 'em raw, but the young ladies, 'specially Miss Ethel, is very fond of stews."

"But we will need a fire to make a stew," Honor objected.

"An' if ye do, can't ye have one? Ye're goin' to Mr. Royalston's old home, ain't ye? There's plenty of fire-places there, and ye can take matches and paper, an' pick up plenty of dry stuff from the old wood-pile."

Honor did not care for the oysters, and she knew all the trouble of preparing them would fall upon herself, but Janet and Ethel would enjoy them, and that thought decided her.

"I will do what I can to give them pleasure," she silently promised, and aloud she said, "Very well, Maggie, I will take the oysters."

"Ye are shure ye know how to cook 'em?" Maggie said as she brought the oysters.

"If I don't, I can learn in a few minutes," Honor said as she took a cook book from a shelf close by.

Maggie looked at her with admiring eyes. "The ladies with their cook books will soon be wiser than their cooks," she said prophetically. "But, Miss Honor, if ye're goin' to have a fire ye might have coffee. Mr. Royalston is very fond of coffee, ye know."

"Then he shall have it," Honor answered.

"I s'pose ye know how to make it?" Maggie said, as she produced a bright tin coffee pot. "If there's anything poorer than poor coffee, Miss Honor, it isn't meself that knows what it is."

"I never made a cup of coffee in my life," Honor acknowledged.

"Wall, then, I'll tell ye how," Maggie said, with the interest of a good teacher. "Here, Miss Honor, ye jest put a full cup of coffee in this pot, an' an egg and a scant teaspoonful of molasses—that is a trick I learned from an old Frenchman—" Maggie explained as Honor looked surprised at the mention of molasses—"it ain't everybody that knows it, but them that do, know that there ain't nothin' like it to make beautiful amber-colored coffee. Now, Miss Honor, you jest stir that all up with a little cold water, then fill the pot with boiling water and set it on the fire and let it boil. An' when it's settled don't ye ever ask me for another receipt if Mr. Royalston don't say that's good coffee."

Honor laughed as she packed the coffee pot in her basket. "If I learn how to make an oyster stew and good coffee to-day, I shan't feel that the day is lost—not even if it should be very disagreeable," she said soberly to herself as she left the kitchen. The light springwagon was before the door when Honor appeared on the piazza, and Mr. Royalston and Janet and Ethel were waiting for her.

"Now," Janet said, "the important question

is, how are we going to sit? Ethel, will you sit with Honor on the back seat?"

Ethel's face changed. "I think you are the one to sit with Honor, Janet," she said, "you know you are more afraid of horses than I am."

"I don't know any such thing, Ethel," Janet said sharply, "and I think you ought to sit with Honor, for you tire sooner than I do, and the back seat is more comfortable than the front one."

"Are we all ready?" Mr. Royalston, who had been examining the harness asked now. "Miss Montgomery," and he looked smilingly at Honor, "have you any choice about your seat?"

- "No," Honor said with something like a sigh.
- "Can you drive?"
- "Yes," she answered in the same sober voice.
- "Then will you sit with the driver and share his responsibility? Janet, and Miss Ethel, will you take the back seat?"

Without a word Honor sprang into the wagon and took the front seat, but Janet and Ethel lingered on the piazza.

"Cousin Vaughn, please come here," Janet called, and as Mr. Royalston obeyed her, she said in a low voice, "I don't see what you mean. You know both Ethel and I wanted

that front seat. Why have you put Honor there?"

"Neither you nor Miss Ethel wanted to sit with her," Mr. Royalston answered.

"No, of course we didn't. We have had enough of her pride and sarcasm," Janet returned.

"Then what could I do?" Mr. Royalston asked. "I have seated Miss Montgomery where I thought she would give the least annoyance to anyone."

In the stillness of the autumn morning every word of that low conversation was distinctly heard by Honor. Again, for the second time since breakfast, her color rose, and she was thankful that the drooping hat she wore shielded her face. Without further argument Janet and Ethel took the back seat, Mr. Royalston touched his horses and they trotted along at a good pace over the delightful country road.

Under different circumstances, Honor, who had a quick eye for all that was beautiful in nature, would have been enraptured with the loveliness of that red-leaf October morning. But now, though the maples along the roadside flamed with fire and glowed with gold, they won no word of admiration from her. Tinybrooks, at intervals, rippled across the road, and then wandered off to lose themselves in the rich pasture fields that lay beyond; but Honor did not see them. Lovely cloud flakes drifted across the sky, and made wondrous light and shadow pictures, but she did not notice them. She was fairly bewildered with pain.

Oh, how could they talk so? she thought mournfully. Am I really so disagreeable that my very presence annoys them? Will they never forgive and forget my hasty words?

She was too humble in her pain to remember any of the slights and provocations she had received from Janet and Ethel; she did not try, even in her most secret thoughts, to excuse herself. She owned that she had been wrong, but her punishment seemed very severe to the poor child, and she sorrowfully wondered how she was to live through the long day before her.

Suddenly she remembered her card, and recalled its second duty—to give all the pleasure that she could. It did not seem likely that she would receive pleasure, but could she give any? In the face of Janet's and Ethel's open dislike the possibility of her being able to give them pleasure seemed very doubtful to Honor; but before they reached Maspeth she had firmly resolved, at any cost to herself, to do what she could to add to their happiness.

With her mind full of these questions and resolves, Mr. Royalston found her during their long drive a very quiet companion, and when he checked his horses before the door of his old home, he said playfully:

"Silence is golden, the Scotch philosopher says, Miss Montgomery; but one can sometimes have too much of it, and now, for the rest of this day, you must give us speech of silver."

"I will give you something better," Honor promised, as she sprang lightly from the wagon, "if you will show me the way to the kitchen, and help me to carry in that basket."

"The kitchen is at the back of the house," Mr. Royalston answered. "And this basket, Miss Montgomery, will get there without your help."

"Very well, I can follow it," Honor said, as Mr. Royalston lifted the basket and marched away with it.

"We must go through the house before we have lunch," Mr. Royalston said, as he unlocked a door and ushered them all into the large and sunny kitchen, and leaving the basket on a table he led the way through a confusing maze of rooms and dark passages. It was all novel and interesting to Honor, and there was something in the old house, that through many long years had been a happy home, and was now so

silent and deserted, that awakened vivid memories of her own past life; but she was intent on giving pleasure that day, and watching her opportunity she soon slipped away from the others and groped her way back to the kitchen.

Her first need was a fire. The fireplace was large but empty, and Honor went in search of the wood pile. She soon found it and though long years had passed since the last load of wood had been cut there, she found dry sticks and chips enough to answer her purpose. Armed with these she went back to the kitchen found her paper and matches, and attempted to make the fire. Her paper burned furiously, and one great piece went soaring triumphantly up the great chimney, but the chips would not blaze, and only blinding whiffs of smoke rewarded her efforts. She was kneeling on the hearth and trying with her mouth, in the absence of a pair of bellows, to coax a blaze when some one near her said:

"If you please, Miss Montgomery, will you tell me what you are trying to do?"

"I am not very good at acting if you can't read the charade," Honor said laughingly. "I am trying to make a fire."

[&]quot;Is it necessary?"

[&]quot;Yes."

[&]quot;Then let me try," and gently pushing her

aside, Mr. Royalston took the fire into his own care.

"There," he said, when in a few moments the flames were leaping up the chimney, "you see what a philosopher can do, Miss Montgomery."

Honor's grave eyes flashed. "Yes, I see," she said, "and now if you will leave me in possession of this kitchen I will soon show you what a woman can do."

"As I have no doubt of your ability it is not necessary for me to go away," Mr. Royalston answered. "Pray, is this basket to be unpacked?"

"Yes, but-"

"Well, what hinders our unpacking it then?"

Honor grew desperate. "Won't you please go?" she said anxiously. "I don't want Janet and Ethel to come until everything is ready."

Mr. Royalston still lingered. "The girls ought to help you," he said.

"No," Honor answered with a little shake of her head, "I would rather get the lunch alone. I want to have my own way."

"I am sure I think you are having your own way when you banish me from this kitchen; at any rate I know I am not having mine," Mr. Royalston said laughingly. "However, madam, in the words of the old Roman, I go, but I re-

turn," and with a gay bow, to Honor's great relief, he departed.

When a little later, drawn by the fragrant fumes of coffee that had penetrated through the house, Mr. Royalston with Janet and Ethel returned to the kitchen, Honor's preparations were nearly completed. The table was spread with a tempting supply of sandwiches, and cakes, olives, jelly and fruit, the coffee pot was standing on the hearth, and Honor was bending over the fire, anxiously watching the cooking of her oysters.

"Oh," Janet exclaimed as she glanced at the table, "how delicious that lunch looks. Is it ready, Honor? What are you doing?"

"Burning her face, I should say," Mr. Royalston replied. "Miss Montgomery—" as he saw Honor's motion—"is that kettle ready to leave the fire?"

Honor nodded. "Then stand aside." And Mr. Royalston laughingly placed the kettle on the hearth.

"What is in it?" Ethel asked. "Oh, oysters," she almost shouted, as she came near and peered curiously into the kettle. "Why, Honor," she said, "I heard you say yesterday that you did not like oysters; have you taken all this trouble for us?"

Only those, who have suffered like Honor

from not being understood and appreciated, can understand the keen pleasure Ethel's words gave her. She could have cried from joy, but she managed to say calmly, "It was no trouble. I wanted to do it."

Mr. Royalston stood by, watching and understanding all that was passing, and now he came to Honor's assistance with the matter-of-fact question, "Miss Montgomery, where are your soup plates?"

"Why," Honor said, as she rushed to the basket, "I do believe I forgot them."

Mr. Royalston laughed at Honor's look of dismay. "Things are seldom so bad that they cannot be remedied," he said. "Somewhere in this house there is a closet well-stocked with dishes. Come Janet and Miss Ethel, let us go and find some soup plates."

An hour later, while they were still lingering over their lunch, Ethel said, "Mr. Royalston, you have some of the loveliest old china I ever saw in that closet. Why don't you live here?"

"For the express purpose of using that china?" Mr. Royalston asked, as for the third time he passed his cup to Honor to be filled.

"Well, that would be one of the pleasures of living here, but it wouldn't be the only one. Why don't you live here, Mr. Royalston?"

"Too lonely. A man has no right to make

a hermit of himself, even though by doing so he can use old china," Mr. Royalston answered.

"Do you really mean that you don't think it would be right for you to live here?" Ethel asked in a surprised voice, while Janet said quickly, "Hasn't a man a right to do whatever he pleases with his own?"

"What do you mean by his own?"

"Why everything that belongs to him, his time, his money, his houses."

Mr. Royalston looked for a minute at the three bright faces before him. Then he said pleasantly, "Before I give you my opinion I would like yours. Miss Ethel, let me begin with you. Being what I am, a young man, strong, educated, and capable of working and of helping my fellow-men, have I any right to make an Alexander Selkirk of myself, and live here almost 'out of humanity's reach'?"

"I don't know why not if you wanted to," Ethel pouted. "I don't think idleness is any sin when one has plenty of money."

"Well," and Mr. Royalston turned to his cousin, "Janet, what do you say?"

"I say you ought to live here," Janet said with spirit. "You have no right to neglect such a beautiful, old, ancestral home as Maspeth."

"I don't neglect it; but we will let that pass.

Now Miss Montgomery, we want your view of this important question."

- "I hardly know what my view is," Honor said thoughtfully. "I should think one would love to live here, but still oughtn't one to—"
 - "Well, what?"
 - "Live where one can be most useful."
- "Oh," Ethel said impatiently, "that is perfect cant, Honor."
- "Yes," Janet chimed in, "it is nothing but priggishness. Who wouldn't live at ease if they could?"

Honor's face was touching in its humility. "I know I would love to live at ease, if I could," she confessed, "but, Janet, the question is not what one would like to do, it is what would be right for one to do: and ought not those who are young and strong to live where they can do the most good?"

"Pray, how long is it since you have thought so much of doing what is right?" Janet asked in a voice sharp with scorn.

"It is just two weeks," Honor said gravely.

For a moment impressed, by something in her face and voice, both Janet and Ethel looked curiously at Honor. Then with a careless laugh Ethel said, "What do you mean, Honor; do you mean that you have, as they say in revivals, experienced religion?"

"Yes," Janet added scornfully, "do you mean that you have turned from your evil ways, Honor, and been converted?"

Just then, to Honor's great relief, Mr. Royalston left the table, and going to the open door stood there looking out in apparent indifference to all that was passing around him. For a second, while her heart beat fast Honor looked at Janet and Ethel. Did they really care for her answer; ought she to give it to them?

While she hesitated, the girls watched her, and now Janet said in a sarcastic tone: "Are you afraid to explain your meaning, Honor? Why don't you show your colors? I wouldn't be ashamed of them, if I were you."

"I am not ashamed of them," Honor said in a tremulous but earnest voice. "Janet and Ethel, I owe you an apology. I was very rude to you when you first came. It roused my pride and made me bitter to be a servant where you were visitors; but now I am trying to be a Christian, and I do want—more than I want anything else in this world—to do right."

"Well," Janet said sharply, "you need not think you are singular in your desires, Honor, or better than others. Ethel and I want to do right just as much as you do."

"Do you and Miss Ethel want to be Chris-

tians?" Mr. Royalston asked, as he suddenly turned around and looked at Janet.

Ethel's face crimsoned. "What is a Christian?" she asked.

Mr. Royalston turned to Honor. "Will you tell us," he asked gently, "what you mean by trying to be a Christian?"

It was an effort for Honor to speak. She could not look up and meet the keen gaze of the eyes that were watching her, but in a voice that, though it was very low they all heard plainly, she said:

"I mean trying to please God, and be like Jesus."

Mr. Royalston bowed his head. "Amen," he said reverently, "may God give us all strength to do so."

CHAPTER X.

OLD CHINA.

"God in thee, can his children's folly gall?

Love may be hurt, but shall not love be strong?"

George Macdonald.

"COUSIN VAUGHN," Janet said, breaking the pause that had followed her cousin's last words, "how much longer can we stay here?"

Mr. Royalston looked at his watch. "It is one o'clock," he said. "If we leave here at half-past three we will reach home in the early twilight. Will that do?"

"Yes," Janet answered. "That will give me a couple of hours for drawing. There is a little sketch I have set my heart on making. Will you and Ethel come with me?"

"And Miss Montgomery?" Mr. Royalston added.

"No," Honor said. "I am in charge of our domestic department to-day, and I cannot go out until I have put everything in as good order as I found it."

"Well," Ethel said, "it is stupid work to

watch Janet sketch, so I will stay and help you, Honor."

"Please yourself," Mr. Royalston said. "It ought not to take many minutes for four quick hands to bring order out of the modest confusion reigning here. I will go and settle Janet at her sketching and then return to you. You need be very careful about nothing but my old china," he said a few minutes later as he stood on the door-step. "That was my great-great grandmother's, and it is more precious than gold, for gold could never replace it."

"I know the value of old china," Ethel answered: "You need not be afraid to trust it to me."

Left alone the two young girls worked with quick and skillful hands, and in a few minutes the fragments of their lunch were gathered up and the basket repacked.

"Now we have only to wash this lovely old china; really it is so exquisite that it is a pleasure to handle it," Ethel said as she reached for the pile of plates.

"Be careful, Ethel," Honor said anxiously.
"Remember, if they are broken they never can be replaced."

"There is no danger of my breaking them," Ethel answered. "Let me have that pitcher of hot water and a towel, Honor, and I will soon dispose of them."

Honor brought the pitcher of hot water and set it on the table. "Do be careful, Ethel," she said again, as Ethel placed the pile of plates dangerously near the edge of the table, and then reached out her hands for the pitcher. The next instant, with a crash that drove the color from the faces of the frightened girls, the pitcher and plates fell from Ethel's hands, and the hot water in the pitcher splashed over Honor's dress, and then ran in tiny streams along the floor, leaving Ethel untouched.

"O Ethel, what have you done? how did it happen?" Honor asked in despair as she looked down on the shivered china.

Ethel burst into tears. "I don't know," she sobbed. "The pitcher was so hot I couldn't hold it. I don't think I ought to be blamed. It was more your fault than mine, Honor, you ought not to have given me such hot water."

"I supposed you had sense enough to take the pitcher up by its handle," Honor said severely. "Oh," she said the next instance as she stooped to pick up the broken plates, "what shall we do; how can we tell Mr. Royalston?"

Ethel watched her without speaking for a few seconds; then in a quick, strained voice she exclaimed, "Honor."

"What?" Honor asked shortly.

"I want to tell you what we can do," Ethel said nervously. "There is no one in this house but you and me, Honor; and if we don't tell no one need ever know that the china was broken. We will throw the pieces away, and Mr. Royalston will think we have put the plates back in the closet. He will never miss them, and there never will be any trouble about them. "Honor, you will do it, won't you?"

"Do what?" Honor asked, as if she did not fully understand Ethel's proposal.

"Why just throw these broken plates away and say nothing about them. You will do so, Honor, won't you? it will be best for us both."

Honor finished picking up the broken dishes and placed them on the table; then she stood up and looked at Ethel.

"Ethel," she said, "you surely do not want to deceive Mr. Royalston."

"He won't thank me for telling him the truth," Ethel said angrily.

"Still you must tell him the truth," Honor insisted. "You cannot do anything else."

"I can and I will do something else," Ethel said. "You don't know Mr. Royalston, Honor, you don't know how severe he can be when he is angry."

"He isn't a wolf," Honor said coldly. "He wouldn't eat you up, Ethel."

A sudden thought struck Ethel. She looked at Honor for a moment, and then said, "You would tell him, if you were in my place, would you?"

"Yes, I would," Honor said firmly.

"Then tell him now," Ethel retorted. "Put yourself in my place in reality, Honor, and tell Mr. Royalston you broke his china, will you?"

"No, that would be only exchanging one falsehood for another, Ethel;" Honor continued seriously, "this is your affair. You broke the china, and you ought to confess it. I am not responsible for the accident, and I do not want to say anything about it, but I would sooner break every dish in Mr. Royalston's closet than deceive him, and I will not even connive at deceiving him. If you will not tell him the truth, I will."

"Yes, that will be acting like a Christian, won't it?" Ethel said bitterly. "It is always easier for Christians to confess the wrongdoings of others, than it is to acknowledge their own."

Ethel's taunt wounded Honor deeply; she could not speak at once and while she was silent, subtile and confusing questions began to trouble her.

Ethel had broken the china; had she any right

to interfere with Ethel's after conduct? would it be kind to reveal what Ethel wished to conceal? but then on the other hand had she any right to stand silently by and allow Mr. Royalston to be deceived.

"Oh dear," she said, "I do wish I knew what I ought to do. Ethel, you will tell Mr. Royalston, won't you?"

Ethel's face changed. "Yes," she said in a peculiar voice, "I will tell Mr. Royalston, but you must promise to say nothing. You must let me tell my story in my own way."

"Yes," Honor said willingly, "I will promise to remain silent. Only tell him: the way in which you tell him will matter very little."

Ethel did not answer; she stood beside the table looking down on the broken plates. Her color came and went, and her lips were compressed. Honor pitied her, but knew not how to help her, and it was a great relief when Mr. Royalston's form darkened the door-way.

"Are you ready for me?" he asked pleasantly. "Ah," he said, as the next instant his keen eyes fell on the broken plates. "My grandmother's china has met with an accident, I see. How did it happen?"

Ethel made a quick movement to attract his attention. "Mr. Royalston," she said, "I want to tell you. Honor filled the pitcher with boil-

ing water, it was too hot to hold; it fell and hit the plates."

Honor's amazement as she listened to Ethel's explanation was indescribable. Ethel told no outright falsehood, she stated the facts as they had occurred; but she omitted one or two important little pronouns, and Honor, to her intense confusion and distress, found herself made responsible in Mr. Royalston's sight for the destruction of his precious china. In her surprise and bewilderment, she could not attempt to defend or exonerate herself. She could only look in astonishment at Ethel; while her wet dress and crimson face confirmed the impression Ethel had so artfully contrived to give.

Mr. Royalston was silent for a few moments; then he took up the broken plates, and standing on the door-step tossed them far off into the bay that flowed a short distance from the house. That done, he stepped back into the kitchen and looked smilingly at Honor.

"The old china is out of sight now," he said kindly, "and we will put it out of our minds as well. Accidents will happen, and you must not blame yourself for this one, Miss Montgomery—I am sure it was unavoidable."

"Ethel," Honor said pleadingly, "Ethel, do please—" and then the tears she was trying to

suppress choked her voice and more words were impossible.

A little surprised, Mr. Royalston looked at Ethel. She was equal to the emergency. "Honor dreaded your displeasure so much," she said, "it is such a relief to find you so kind."

For the first time Mr. Royalston looked annoyed. "I wonder what I have done to make you think me such an ogre, Miss Montgomery," he said, "and I really would like to know what you expected me to do about that china. Did you expect me to scold you like a tyrant? Well," he continued in a lighter tone, "I certainly shall scold you if you look unhappy another moment. Stop," he said almost sternly, as Honor attempted to speak, "this is too much like making mountains of mole-hills; don't say another word about this insignificant affair. It doesn't pain me half as much to have my china broken, as it pains me to be doubted and thought unkind."

After these words it was impossible for Honor to speak. She turned silently away and busied herself with two or three little things that still remained to be done. Mr. Royalston was surprised and disappointed; he could not understand her behavior; he made several kind attempts to interest her in conversation, but

Honor was too troubled to respond; and presently he turned from her and for the remainder of their day in Maspeth he troubled her with few words.

One last attempt that night Honor made to influence Ethel.

"Ethel," she said, when in the early evening she met Ethel alone in the hall, "I can hardly believe that you meant to wrong me as you did to-day. I don't think you realized the position you placed me in. Did you?" and she waited anxiously for Ethel's answer.

Ethel did not keep her waiting long. "I wish," she said angrily, "I wish, Honor Montgomery, that you would choose some other subject to talk about. I never want to speak of that old china again."

"But you wronged me," Honor insisted.
"You gave Mr. Royalston a false impression."

"Why didn't you correct it then? You are not deficient in language."

"You took me so completely by surprise," Honor said sadly. "Ethel," she pleaded, "won't you tell Mr. Royalston the truth about his china?"

"Tell him that I broke it?" Ethel said quickly. "No, thank you, Honor. I will do nothing of the kind. I don't know why you should care so much, if he does think you broke

it," the girl added jealously, "I am sure he was very kind to you."

"Yes, I know he was," Honor admitted, but still, it makes me very unhappy to have him think that I broke his china."

"Well, do you suppose it would add to my happiness to have him know that I broke it?" Ethel asked sarcastically.

"Yes," Honor said firmly. "I am sure you would be happier if he knew. You cannot be very happy now with a falsehood on your conscience."

"I told no falsehood. I only omitted one or two words," Ethel said sharply. "Why don't you tell him yourself?" she demanded in an excited voice.

"I don't know," Honor said slowly. "I suppose I might tell him, but—"

"Yes," Ethel broke in, "you might, and I should think you would tell him. You haven't lost his good opinion, though he does suppose you broke the dishes; but now if you were to tell him that I broke them he would scorn me for my cowardice and deceit. Oh yes, go and tell him; it would be kind and Christian-like to do so."

Honor stood still a minute. Ethel's last bitter words seemed to place the matter in a new light. She thought seriously for that minute, and then she said: "Ethel, I suppose this affair really concerns you and me alone. Mr. Royalston was not deceived about his china, and he would probably care very little whether it slipped from your hands or mine. It pains me to have him think I broke it, but the breaking was only an accident, there was no sin about it, and so I can bear the pain—if I must."

"And you won't tell him, nor Mrs. Pennock?" Ethel interrupted eagerly. "O Honor, I will love you forever if you won't."

Honor's smile, like her words, was tinged with bitterness. "I am afraid your love, like your truthfulness, would be unsafe to depend upon, Ethel," she said, "but you may depend upon my silence. I will never undeceive Mr. Royalston."

"Hark," Ethel exclaimed as just then a peculiar creaking noise sounded very near them. "What was that?"

"I don't know," Honor answered indifferently; "a mouse, perhaps. Good-night, Ethel," she added as she turned away, "I hope you never will be as disappointed in anyone's truthfulness as I have been in yours."

The next morning at the breakfast table Mrs. Pennock said: "I wish you would give me a full account of your excursion yesterday, Vaughn. What I heard last evening was very

unsatisfactory; for you were writing, Janet was dumb about everything but her sketch, Honor was in her room, and Ethel was as dull as if she had been out all day in a rain storm instead of on a pleasure excursion. Now, Vaughn, you can generally tell a straight-forward story. What did you do yesterday?"

Mr. Royalston smiled. "Just what we planned, Aunt Esther. We went to Maspeth, and we returned home."

"And in the between-time what happened?"

"Various things, Aunt Esther. Perhaps the event some of us will remember longest was the breaking of some of Grandmother Royalston's china."

"What," Mrs. Pennock exclaimed, "not some of the set your great-great grandfather brought from Dresden, Vaughn?"

"Yes, the very same, Aunt Esther."

"And you brought out some of those dishes for these careless girls to handle?" Mrs. Pennock said severely. "Well, you may be scientific, Vaughn, but you certainly are not sensible. How were they broken?"

Mr. Royalston hesitated a second, then he said quietly, "Ask Miss Ethel, Aunt Esther."

"Why ask her? Were hers the clumsy hands that broke them?"

Mr. Royalston glanced at Ethel. "Will you

answer that question, Miss Ethel?" he said calmly.

Ethel's face was flame color. "I thought I answered it yesterday," she said hurriedly.

- "You have no additional facts to give us this morning?"
 - "No, why should I have?"
- "If you cannot answer your own question then of course I cannot answer it," Mr. Royalston said coolly. "Miss Montgomery," and to Honor's dismay he looked at her, "will you tell Aunt Esther how that old china—that is in a fair way now, I think, to become famous—was broken?"

Honor felt tongue-tied. The promise she had given Ethel made it impossible for her to comply with Mr. Royalston's request.

"I cannot add anything to Ethel's state-

ment," she faltered.

"Then be good enough—somebody—to tell me what Ethel's statement was," Mrs. Pennock said impatiently.

"It was to this effect, Aunt Esther, that a pitcher of hot water dropped accidentally and broke the china."

"Pitchers don't drop without hands. Ethel, who dropped that pitcher, you or Honor?"

The direct question Ethel had been dreading, was asked at last, and to it she must give a direct reply. It had not been very difficult for Ethel to suppress part of the truth. Evasions and prevarications she was unfortunately often guilty of, but a positive falsehood she did shrink from uttering. But a white lie usually needs to be bolstered up by a black one, and Ethel knew now that she must make a humiliating confession or tell an undeniable untruth. She was loath to speak, but she remembered Honor's promise and felt secure; and so, though her eyes fell and her voice trembled a little, she answered after a moment's hesitation, "Honor's."

"Honor's," Mrs. Pennock repeated. "Honor," she said reprovingly, "how could you be so careless?"

Poor Honor, between her great desire to free herself from blame and her conscientious purpose to keep her promise to Ethel, had great difficulty in answering Mrs. Pennock. "I meant to be careful," she stammered; and then she realized that by those very words she had confirmed Ethel's story, and she stopped in confusion.

"You meant to be careful," Mrs. Pennock repeated sternly. "Yes, I suppose you did; but good intentions are poor excuses for careless actions. The china you broke was not only very valuable in itself, but it was precious because of many old associations. If carefulness

is ever a duty, it is when we are trusted with the property of others, as I hope you will try to remember if I am ever again foolish enough to send you into my china closet."

It was very painful to be reproved by Mrs. Pennock for a fault of which she had not been guilty, but after one appealing glance at Ethel, Honor made no attempt to defend herself. She felt that she had pledged herself to Ethel, and that until Ethel chose to speak she must remain silent. But many times that day she wondered if she had not made a mistake, and if the trying position in which she found herself was not due quite as much to her own folly as to Ethel's falsehood. Stung by Ethel's taunts, and impelled by an earnest desire to act as she thought a Christian ought, she had consented at much pain to herself to shield Ethel, but had she done right?

She was puzzling over that question in the evening, while she sat in the library tying bright colored wools together for Mrs. Pennock's "crazy afghan." It was a question she found it hard to answer satisfactorily, and it was a relief, as well as a surprise to her, when Mr. Royalston dropped the book he was holding and said suddenly:

"Aunt Esther, I want your opinion. When you know that a person is guilty of deception

and falsehood have you any right to try to shield them, even though in doing so you bear all the unpleasant consequences of their false conduct yourself?"

"Have I any right to make it easy for anyone to continue in wrong doing," Mrs. Pennock said seriously. "No Vaughn, assuredly I have not."

"But you are the only one that suffers—we will suppose—" Mr. Royalston said in a peculiar voice, "and isn't it acting like a Christian to deny yourself and be kind to one who wrongs you?"

"In other words, and to use good forcible Saxon, if some one lies about me, and throws blame on me that ought in justice to fall on that some one, is it not my duty as a Christian not to expose the falsehood? Is that what you mean, nephew Vaughn?"

"Something like it," Mr. Royalston said with an odd little smile. "Wouldn't such conduct be fulfilling the golden rule? Wouldn't you be doing unto another as you would wish to be done by, Aunt Esther?"

"Vaughn Royalston," Mrs. Pennock said in her most emphatic voice, "when did you turn sophist? How can you ask me such questions? Is the Golden Rule meant to be a protection to wrong doing? Do we, if we are Christians, do as we would be done by when we aid or give any encouragement to another to do wrong?"

Mr. Royalston turned quickly to Honor. "What do you think, Miss Montgomery?" he asked.

She did not answer his question but she asked another. "What can we do then?" she said anxiously, "when others beg us to spare them, and we will be the only sufferers if we do so?"

"We can be true," Mr. Royalston answered gravely. "It is no kindness to help another to tell a falsehood or act a lie. It is always the truest kindness to them, as well as to ourselves, to have the truth revealed."

"There is a great deal of false sentiment and mistaken kindness in the world about this very question," Mrs. Pennock said soberly.

"And truth is the one grand remedy," Mr. Royalston answered.

"It is very hard, sometimes, to insist that others shall be truthful," Honor said with a sigh.

"Ah," Mr. Royalston answered, "we make sad blunders, sometimes, because in our dealings with others we forget that we are dealing with souls. We think only of sparing another a little present pain or humiliation, and we forget that by that very pain or humiliation a soul

may be ennobled and uplifted, while by our weak sentimentality and mistaken kindness we may harm a soul forever."

"But, suppose," Honor said earnestly, "suppose you are bound by a promise."

"To conceal another's falsehood? Ah, it is in such meshes that we entangle ourselves when we forget the sacredness of truth."

"But a promise is always a sacred thing," interrupted Ethel, who had been listening with many strange doubts and fears.

"Do you think so? then I hope you will try to keep one I heard you make last night," Mr. Royalston said with marked meaning.

"I don't understand you," Ethel began; but with a manner that seemed at once impatient and displeased. Mr. Royalston turned from her. His stern face softened a little as he met Honor's troubled and questioning eyes.

"Miss Honor," he said gently, "it is impossible, perhaps, to lay down a law that will suit every case, but it is always allowable to suppose a case—and if I had a friend who had made a promise to conceal another's falsehood, I think I should urge that friend to be strong for the truth, not only for her own sake, but for the sake of that other soul, who under the shelter of her promise has perhaps taken the first false step on a downward road. Remem-

ber," and to Ethel's consternation, Mr. Royalston now looked fixedly at her, "remember the
truth must be known sometime. If not here,
then—"with a little upward gesture—"there."
There was a moment's silence, and then to
Janet's and Mrs. Pennock's surprise, Honor
dropped her bright wools and went over to
Ethel's chair. The two girls whispered together for a few minutes. Those who watched
could see that Ethel was fearful and unwilling,
while Honor seemed to plead with and encourage her. Presently Ethel pushed Honor away,
and crossed the room to Mr. Royalston.

"Mr. Royalston," she said, "I believe you know it already; but if you don't I suppose I ought to tell you. Your china fell from my hands——"

- "Then why," Mrs. Pennock exclaimed indignantly, "why couldn't and didn't you say so in the beginning?"
- "Because I was afraid," Ethel unwillingly confessed.
- "Your courage is the more to be commended now then," Mr. Royalston said kindly, but without any appearance of surprise. "I am glad you have told me, Miss Ethel," he continued after a thoughtful pause. "Glad for my own sake—for I should be very sorry to have our pleasant friendship broken—and glad for

Aunt Esther,"—with a little smile at Honor— "that you have made it possible for her to trust Miss Montgomery once more in her china closet."

Janet beat the floor impatiently with her foot. "I have heard such a hue-and-cry to-day over old china, that I am tired of the very name," she said fretfully.

"Then we will dismiss the subject," Mr. Royalston said quietly, "but let us all remember—" and as he spoke his voice grew very serious—" let us all remember, that a temptation yielded to is sin, but a temptation conquered is a step toward heaven."

CHAPTER XI.

QUARRELS AND REPROOFS.

"Have good-will

To all that lives, letting unkindness die,

And greed, and wrath: so that your lives be made

Like soft airs passing by."

-Edwin Arnold.

CONSCIOUS that the two young girls were painfully excited, and believing that they would not soon forget the lesson they had received, Mr. Royalston, for the remainder of that evening, kindly endeavored to amuse and interest them. Out from their hiding places he brought photographs collected through years of travel in all parts of the world, and in looking at them and listening to his clear explanations and descriptions, both Ethel and Honor forgot for the time their unpleasant difference. And when the evening was over, and Honor went to her room, she cherished the hope that there would be no more misunderstandings between Janet and Ethel and herself. But it is no easy task to conquer jealousy and envy, either in our own hearts, or the hearts of others, and Honor soon discovered that Janet and Ethel were far from being reconciled to her, and still took a malicious satisfaction in irritating and annoying her. Like many young Christians Honor—as soon as she began to pray—had trusted and believed that all the little crosses and temptations to wrong doing that she daily encountered would be removed from her path. But she had now to learn, that God, in educating his children, is more anxious to make them perfect, than he is to make them comfortable in their minds, and satisfied with themselves. And she learned too, from many sorrowful failures, that only the infinite power of our heavenly Father can uphold us, and make us victorious in our struggles to evercome our besetting sins.

Naturally, Honor was proud and sensitive; quick to feel and to resent slights, and quick, too to give sarcasm for sarcasm, and scorn for scorn. In the ladder by which we climb from earth to heaven our conquered temptations make strong rounds; but before the temptations are conquered, while we are daily and almost hourly enduring and resisting them, we are not apt to feel that we are climbing heavenward, but we more often feel like bruised and wounded birds, beaten back to earth in spite of all our efforts to rise. As the autumn days went by Honor often felt discouraged, for in her intercourse with Janet and Ethel, she was constantly

tempted to yield to her pride, temper, and uncharitableness. Each morning, before she left her room, she would prayerfully resolve to be gentle and forbearing throughout the day, but each night she found herself compelled to confess that she had broken her resolutions, and failed to conquer her temptations.

Ethel could neither forgive nor forget that Honor's conduct had been more truthful and unselfish than her own; and she was jealously conscious that it was so regarded by both Mr. Royalston and Mrs. Pennock. Janet not only sympathized with Ethel; but, for reasons she would have blushed to acknowledge, her envy of Honor increased instead of lessening as the days went by.

Janet Howard's besetting sin was selfishness; to be preferred before others, and to possess more than others, was her supreme ambition. She had quickly detected her aunt's interest in Honor, and instead of rejoicing in it for Honor's sake, she resented it as a personal injury to herself. With the keen perception some unlovely natures have of the foibles and weaknesses of others, she had soon discovered Honor's foolish pride and sensitiveness about her position. Honor's humble apology at Maspeth had not softened her, and now she lost no opportunity to mortify and humiliate her.

"Honor," Mrs. Pennock said, one morning as she entered the library, where by her appointment the three girls were dusting and arranging the book shelves, "I have just received a letter from Mrs. Stanley; she wishes to be kindly remembered to you."

"Cousin Helen Stanley," Janet exclaimed.

"Why, Honor, do you know her?"

"I have met her," Honor answered. "She was very kind to me," she added gratefully, "she sent me here."

Janet put the book she had been dusting back in its place with a good deal of force, and then she demanded: "How did you happen to meet her?"

"I think it was through God's ordering," Honor answered gently.

"Don't talk cant," Janet said impatiently. "Honor," she began again after a moment's silence, "do you expect to spend the rest of your life cleaning Aunt Esther's lamps?"

Honor had "a sense of thunder in the air," but she controlled herself, and answered pleasantly; "I do not know about the rest of my life, but until I find something I can do better, I hope Mrs. Pennock will let me clean her lamps."

"You shall do so as long as you like, my dear," Mrs. Pennock said with more than her usual kindness, as she took up the magazine she had come for and left the library.

Any expression of kind feeling for Honor from Mrs. Pennock always irritated Janet; and now she said scornfully, "I am sure of one thing, Honor, if old Cardinal Wolsey were here he would not think it necessary to charge you to fling away ambition, for truly I do not believe there ever was a girl with less ambition than you have."

"You are not infallible. I may have ambition though you do not believe it," Honor replied with spirit.

"Why don't you show that you have, then? Why don't you try to be something more than a mere servant?"

"Why she is trying," Ethel broke in with an irritating laugh, "don't you remember, Mrs. Pennock told us yesterday that she wished we would study, and try to improve ourselves like Honor."

"Well," Janet said, "I am very glad if you are studying, Honor. Judging from the lessons you used to have at school, I don't know of anyone who needs to study more than you do."

Honor's eyes flashed: such cutting remarks, even though she knew they were undeserved, stung her. "I am afraid you do not know your

own needs very well, Janet," she said sarcastically.

"If I do not, I will never trouble my aunt's servant to tell them to me," Janet retorted.

Honor's voice trembled. "This servant," she said with scornful emphasis, "has no desire either to reveal or to supply your needs."

"No, I suppose not, that is what might be expected from a servant who professes to be a Christian," Janet returned bitterly.

Honor winced. Janet's taunt about her profession hurt her deeply. "Oh Janet," she exclaimed, "how can you make it so hard for me to behave like a Christian?"

"Because, I do not believe you are a Christian," Janet replied. "I only expose your true character. Christians don't fly into a rage whenever a word is said they do not happen to like."

"Then if you do not believe I am a Christian, wouldn't it be kind in you to try to help me to be one," Honor asked; but though her words were meek her voice was sharp and scornful.

"I should suppose you were a saint already without any need of my help, if I judged from the tone of your voice," Janet said with a provoking laugh.

"I don't pretend to be a saint," Honor answered sadly, "but I do wish I was one, and,

Janet, I wish you would forgive everything I have done and said that you do not like, and—"

"You had better indulge wishes more likely to be granted," Janet interrupted pitilessly.

To be repulsed, after we have humbled ourselves and sought to conciliate others, is always very painful, and often very exasperating to our pride. Her little conciliatory speech had cost Honor a great effort, and to have it so rudely slighted awakened all her pride and indignation.

"I will act upon your advice," she said angrily, "and I will wish that you may see yourself as others see you, Janet, and know just how rude, unladylike, unkind, and disagreeable you really are."

"Thank you, when I follow your example and go out to service, I will refer to you, instead of to Mrs. Stanley, for a character," Janet retorted.

"I have said all I am ever going to say about you, and I will never speak to you again if I can possibly avoid it," Honor exclaimed, as with trembling hands she placed the last book she had to dust in its place.

"I hope you will keep your promise, for really it is a great annoyance to me to be obliged to talk with you," Janet said tauntingly; and unable to endure more, Honor rushed out of the library.

"Honor," Mrs. Pennock called, as the angry girl was hurrying past her room, "come in here. I want to speak to you."

Honor did not dare to disobey that call; but the face with which she answered it looked so flushed and angry, that Mrs. Pennock asked in surprise, "Honor, what is the matter with you?"

"Nothing," Honor answered.

"Nothing must be a very serious thing when it can make a girl look as angry as you look now," Mrs. Pennock replied. "I wish," she continued slowly, while Honor stood before her with burning cheeks and flashing eyes, "I wish, Honor, you would tell me why, whenever Janet, Ethel, and you are together, you find it necessary to quarrel?"

"We shall not quarrel again," Honor said quickly, "for I will never speak to them again if I can possibly help doing so."

"You think they are altogether in fault, do you?" Mrs. Pennock asked calmly.

"They are very unkind," Honor said passionately.

"I am afraid they are. But in your intercourse with them have you nothing to reproach yourself with?" The hot tears blinded Honor's eyes. "I have a great deal to reproach myself for," she confessed, "but, O Mrs. Pennock, you don't know how very unhappy they make me."

"I am sorry," Mrs. Pennock said gravely, but you must remember, Honor, that they are my visitors, and for the remainder of their stay here I hope you will, for my sake, be patient and pleasant with them. Remember, I expect you to behave like a Christian girl, Honor, and if you want a portrait of a Christian girl here is one for you." And Mrs. Pennock opened the New Testament on her table, turned to the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and read slowly:

"A Christian girl—'Suffereth long and is kind.'

- "A Christian girl-'envieth not."
- "A Christian girl-' seeketh not her own.'
- "A Christian girl—' is not easily provoked—thinketh no evil.'
- "A Christian girl—'beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.'
- "There," Mrs. Pennock said gravely, but with much kindness as she closed the book, "there is the ideal Christian's portrait for you, Honor. Now let it be your constant endeavor to grow like it.

"I called you," Mrs. Pennock proceeded to explain after a moment's pause, "to tell you that I have invited some friends, who are visiting a few miles from here, to spend a couple of days with us. They will be here to-morrow to dinner, and as you will have a good deal to do, I think you had better attend to these little matters to-day." As Mrs. Pennock spoke she gave Honor one of her little cards, and then said kindly, "You can go now, my dear, do not forget that I think you worthy of my confidence."

With a face as humble and gentle as a little while before it had been angry and proud, Honor went about her duties. She had much to do, but while she was seeding raisins, and making jelly, and examining silver and linen, her mind was dwelling on the wonderful picture Mrs. Pennock had shown her. Was that in truth a portrait of a Christian? Was it what God required her to strive to become? It was not hard for Honor to answer those questions; but soon some unpleasant recollections began to trouble her. If she wanted to grow like that perfect portrait she knew that bitter thoughts must have no room in her heart, and bitter words must be strangers to her lips. She must break the angry promise she had made that morning, and she must school herself to speak pleasantly, under all circumstances, to Janet and Ethel; for how could she dare to profess to be one of God's children, and yet not be able to speak kindly to all God's other children with whom she came in contact? But she must do even more than that. She must frankly acknowledge that there had been fault on her part, as well as on Janet's and Ethel's; and she must ask forgiveness. What the girls might say was a question she was not called upon to consider: her own duty was plain, and that at any cost she must perform. Honor had a sharp struggle with her pride that day, but at last she felt that she had conquered. Just at dusk she met Janet in the hall; since their quarrel they had not spoken, and now Janet would have passed her without notice but Honor stopped her.

"Janet," she said gently, "I want to speak to you."

"Do you?" Janet said rudely, "after your words this morning, I am sure I ought to feel flattered. What do you want?"

This was not a promising beginning, but Honor persevered. "Janet," she said, and her voice, like her words, was sweet and humble, "I was wrong this morning. I said many unpleasant things to you. I think now that perhaps it is my fault that you have been unkind

to me, and I want to tell you that I am very sorry I have behaved so badly."

Janet had listened in undisguised impatience. "You really need not have troubled to speak to me about this insignificant affair," she said with cutting coolness. "You make yourself much unnecessary trouble when you imagine that anything you can say or do has any effect on me. While I am here, visiting my aunt, and you remain here in her service, we will both remember our places and keep them; and then you will not need to offer me any more apologies. Do you want to say anything more to me?"

Alas, for all Honor's good resolves; once more her incensed pride gained a victory, and with the quick answer, "No, neither now nor ever," she pushed aside the portiere, and entered the library.

With the taunting words, "You need not fear that I shall ever try to break your silence," Janet followed her.

To the consternation of both girls Mr. Royalston was sitting in his favorite chair before the fire, near enough to the curtained door to have heard all that passed in the hall. "Good-evening," he said quietly.

Janet stood a moment irresolute, and then with a nervous laugh she asked, "Have you been here long, cousin Vaughn?"

"Perhaps half an hour. What makes the question of my possible presence or absence so interesting?"

Janet did not answer; with a disturbed face and manner she seated herself by the table and took up a book. Mr. Royalston looked at her for a moment, and then his eyes roved to Honor. She was lighting the lamp, but her face was crimson, and he could see that her hands were trembling.

"Janet," he said, turning to his cousin, "I heard voices in the hall a few minutes ago, and by some subtle association of ideas, you perhaps can understand, I was reminded of some lines by Edwin Arnold, that I read not long ago. If you and Miss Montgomery will listen, I will repeat them to you."

Janet tossed her book upon the table, and started up. "You can repeat what you like," she said ungraciously, as she walked to the door, "but as I am in no mood to be preached to, I will, if you please, withdraw."

"Stay, Janet, I wish you to," Mr. Royalston said with grave gentleness, but Janet hurried

away.

Mr. Royalston sighed as he looked at Honor. "Are you, too, afraid of being preached to, Miss Honor?" he asked kindly.

Honor's eyes were bent upon the lamp; she

could not look up and meet Mr. Royalston's penetrating gaze, nor could she control her unsteady voice, but she managed to say:

"If the preaching could only do me good, I would not be afraid of it."

"Then suppose we try it," Mr. Royalston said, as he took a little paper out of his pocket-book. "It will not detain you long." And unfolding the paper in a low but emphatic voice he read:

- "'Thought in the mind hath made us. What we are
 By thought was wrought and built. If man's mind
 Hath evil thoughts, pain comes on him, as comes
 The wheel the ox behind.
- "'All that we are is what we thought and willed,
 Our thoughts shape us and frame us. If one endure
 In purity of thought, joy follows him
 As his own shadow sure.
- "'He hath defamed me, wronged me, injured me,
 Abased me, beaten me. If one should keep
 Thoughts, like these angry words, within his heart,
 Hatreds will never sleep.
- "'He hath defamed me, wronged me, injured me,
 Abased me, beaten me. If one shall send
 Such angry words away for pardoning thoughts,
 Hatreds will have an end.
- "'For never any where, at any time,
 Did hatred cease by hatred. Always 'tis
 By love that hatred ceases, only love:
 The ancient law is this.

"'The many who are foolish have forgot,
Or never knew, how mortal wrongs pass by,
But they, who know and who remember, let
Transient quarrels die.'"

Mr. Royalston finished reading the little poem, folded it, and placed it again in his pocket-book, and still Honor stood mute and motionless by the table. "How do you like my little sermon, Miss Honor?" he asked gently.

Honor did not look up, and he could not see her eyes, but he knew there were tears, as she said, "Isn't it easier to preach it, than it is to practice it?"

"Yes," Mr. Royalston answered, "it is easier to preach, than to practice such a sermon. But I am not sure that it would be, if we remembered and claimed one of our great birthright privileges."

Honor looked up. "What is that?" she asked quickly.

"The privilege of a child to claim his heavenly Father's help in every time of trouble," Mr. Royalston answered.

"Oh," Honor exclaimed impulsively, "you don't know how often that help seems to fail us just when we need it most."

"I am glad you acknowledge that it only 'seems' to fail," Mr. Royalston said kindly;

"for, Miss Honor, in reality, God never fails to hear and answer his children's cries for help."

"Why then do our worst failures often follow our most earnest prayers?" Honor demanded

passionately.

"I am not sure that they do; are you?" Mr.

Royalston asked in a quiet voice.

"Yes," Honor said impetuously. "I have struggled and prayed all day for strength to be gentle and pleasant when others were rude and unkind; and yet, just as soon as I am tried, I break all my good resolutions; I give bitter answers to bitter words, and I am angry, proud, and—hateful. Surely no one would dare to say that my prayers this day have been answered, and yet—" and her words sounded like a cry of pain—"I have truly prayed today."

"And then, just when you needed help most, and needed to keep closest to your Saviour, you let go his hand. You began to trust to your own strength, and so failed," Mr. Royalston said in a quiet voice, as if repeating a truth his own life experience had taught him.

'Honor's face changed. "In my own strength," she repeated, "I never thought of that."

"And yet that is the solution of your puzzle," Mr. Royalston gravely insisted. "Our fail-

ures only prove the insufficiency of our own strength, they do not prove the insufficiency of God's."

Honor looked troubled. "It seems strange, since we are so weak, and so sure to fail, that God should let temptations come to us," she said doubtfully. "It would be so much easier for us to be good, if we were not so tempted and tried."

"Do you ever think that your very temptations may be your opportunities?" Mr. Royalston asked kindly. "You pray for patience; can you gain patience if you have no temptation to be impatient? You pray for charity; and soon, perhaps, comes the temptation to judge some one uncharitably. You pray for humility, and soon God says, 'Sit down in the lowest seat.' You do not think that God is answering your prayers; and yet here are precious opportunities given you to gain the very virtues for which you have prayed."

Mr. Royalston's suggestion was a new thought to Honor. She was thinking over her "temptations," and renaming them "opportunities," when Mr. Royalston spoke again. "Miss Honor," he said, "I wish you would give me a friend's privilege."

"I don't know what that is," Honor said, with a child's naturalness.

"It is the privilege to speak to you very plainly, or perhaps, I ought to say scold you a little," Mr. Royalston answered with a smile. "May I do so?"

Honor looked a little frightened. "I know I need scolding," she said hurriedly.

"If you are conscious that you need it, then of course you know for what you need it," Mr. Royalston said quietly, "and if you know, I wish you would tell me."

Honor hesitated a moment, then she said frankly, "For the same reason that made you read me that little poem."

"Because I overheard your conversation with Janet in the hall? No, Miss Honor, I want to go farther than that; I want to know the reason, or rather, the cause that can make such conversations, or more truly quarrels, as you and Janet and Ethel have, possible."

Honor felt not only frightened now but dismayed. There was no doubt but Mr. Royalston meant to speak plainly; but how was she to answer him. For a moment she felt inclined to run away; but if Mr. Royalston looked firm he seemed at the same time kind and sincere. He waited patiently, but she knew he expected her to answer him, and at last she stammered; "I don't know how to tell you. Janet and Ethel look down on me because I am poor, and

-a-servant, and I-am proud, and it stings me."

"You have told me the truth," Mr. Royalston said gently, "but, Miss Honor, when you know the cause of your trouble, why do you not apply the remedy?"

"I have tried to pray," Honor said humbly, but oh," and she looked appealingly at Mr. Royalston, "you don't know how hard it is to

be slighted and looked down on."

"I think I can imagine," Mr. Royalston said in a voice as kind as it was grave. "I know you have been disappointed in your old schoolmates; I know you find it hard to bear their slights, but Miss Honor, I do not want now to talk of Janet and Ethel. I do not even want to offer you sympathy in your trials; I want instead to help you, if possible, to overcome and rise above them."

"How can I do that," Honor asked sadly.

"You cannot do it by rebelling against your lot," Mr. Royalston replied with gentle firmness. "You cannot do it by indulging your pride, and bitter thoughts, your hasty temper, or your sharp tongue. The social distinctions made by wealth and position may seem false and unjust, but they exist, and it is useless to resent them."

"But they do irritate and humiliate me so," Honor said with an eager desire to excuse herself. "I am willing to fill a humble place—if I am not fitted for a better one,—but to be constantly exposed to slights, and even insults, from those who know no more and are no better than I am; it makes me bitter, and angry, and I cannot help rebelling."

"Did you choose your lot in life, or did God appoint it for you?" Mr. Royalston asked. Honor's eyes fell. "I did not choose it," she

Honor's eyes fell. "I did not choose it," she said sadly.

"But you came to it by God's appointment.
You believe that?"

"Yes," she said softly.

"Then, when in your pride, you rebel against your lot, does it not just come to this; rebellion against your heavenly Father's will? Miss Honor," and Mr. Royalston's voice was touched with deep feeling now, "for you, for me, for all, who in pride rebel against the inequalities and crosses in life, there is but one remedy—submission to the will of God. Remember, in God's plan for his children there are no accidents and no chances. A love that cannot err is ordering all your steps. Even the little trials that you daily meet, will be like hands outstretched to help you heavenward, if you but meet them in the right spirit."

"In the right spirit," Honor softly repeated.

"Yes, not in pride and rebellion, but in

meekness and love. Pride is the cause of all your present troubles—humility and unselfish love for others will cure them all."

"I know that is a hard lesson," Mr. Royalston added, after a brief but thoughtful pause, "but it must be learned, for the door into the kingdom of heaven opens only to love."

"There, Miss Honor," he said more lightly, as voices in the hall warned of interruptions, "my sermon is ended, and my audience is free, at last, to go."

CHAPTER XII.

THROUGH ONE DAY.

"Never a day is given
But it tones the future years;
And it carries up to heaven,
Our sunshine and our tears;
While the to-morrows stand and wait,
The silent mutes by the outer gate."
—Henry Burton.

THE early hours of the next day were very busy ones for Honor. Notwithstanding the extra preparations made the day before, the card Mrs. Pennock handed her at the breakfast table was a very full one, and from one room to another, and from one task to another, Honor went with swift feet and ready hands, but not always with a willing heart. In spite of Mr. Royalston's kind warnings, and her own good resolutions, she felt peevish and irritable; she forgot to watch and pray that her temptations to pride might be made stepping stones to humility; and very soon a secret rebellion against her lot in life cast its dark shadow over her spirit, and made her discontented and unhappy; ready once more to take offence at trifles, and (204)

quick to speak the hasty words that only serve to stir up strife and deepen bitter feelings.

By Mrs. Pennock's orders, great masses of chrysanthemums were to be arranged in the different rooms; and late in the morning, with her hands full of the beautiful flowers, Honor went into the parlor where Janet and Ethel were idly lounging. "O Honor," Ethel said eagerly, "we were just speaking of you. Do you know that some of the people who are coming here to-day are named Montgomery? Isn't it queer that your name should be like theirs?"

Ethel's information surprised Honor, but she answered coolly: "I don't know that it's so very queer. I never supposed that I was the only Montgomery in the world."

"Then you don't care?" Ethel asked in a voice full of curiosity.

"No, why should I care?" Honor replied.
"Mrs. Pennock's friends are nothing to me."

"That being the case, I suppose you won't wish to claim relation to them," Janet remarked now.

"No, I imagine not," Honor answered with a careless laugh. "If they are at all like some of Mrs. Pennock's other friends, to find myself related to them would be a trial rather than a pleasure."

"Give yourself no anxiety," Janet said scorn-

fully, "I can assure you, for your comfort, that a servant would be the last person in this world that Professor Montgomery would willingly acknowledge as a relation."

"Are you related to him?" Honor inquired expressively.

"In a certain sense, yes; Mrs. Montgomery is my second cousin."

Honor's smile was as unpleasant as her words. "I am sorry for the professor that he cannot claim a direct connection with you," she said, "for next to the happiness we find in being good and noble ourselves, is the happiness we feel in being related to good people."

"Janet is as good as you are, any way, Honor Montgomery," Ethel exclaimed now. "You call yourself a Christian, I believe. Well, if you are a Christian, you are the bitterest and most inconsistent one I ever knew. There, that is my candid opinion of you, now make the most of it."

Make the most of it. Honor looked for a few seconds as if she would never be able to make much of anything again. Her color came and went, and her hands trembled so that the flowers she was holding dropped from them. Without speaking she turned to leave the room, but a voice in the door-way stopped her.

"What is the matter?" she heard Mr. Royal-

ston say. "Young ladies are you having a battle with chrysanthemums or words, this morning?"

"Neither," Janet said boldly, "we have only been expressing our opinions of each other."

"They must have been charitable opinions, judging from the effect they have produced," Mr. Royalston remarked soberly.

Ethel shrank back a little as she met his keen eyes. "At least they were truthful opinions," she said, with a poor attempt to appear indifferent.

"Did you speak them? then please repeat them to me. 'Truth never hurts the teller,' you know."

Ethel hesitated, but she could not resist Mr. Royalston's air of quiet authority.

"Well," she said defiantly, "if the truth never hurts the teller, I don't know why it should hurt the hearer, and I told Honor she was bitter and inconsistent."

"Inconsistent, hey?" Mr. Royalston said.
"Well, that is a sin we must all plead guilty
of. The poet Pope knew human nature pretty
well, I imagine, and these are his words.

[&]quot;'Show me one that has it in his power,
To act consistent with himself one hour."

[&]quot;You see, Miss Ethel, it is hardly prudent

for people who live in glass houses to throw stones."

Ethel pouted, but before she could gain courage to utter the defiant words that trembled on her lips, Honor said in a low but earnest voice:

"Ethel was right in what she told me, Mr. Royalston; I am very sorry I gave her any occasion to call me bitter and inconsistent, but I did. I do not want to be so disagreeable, but Janet and Ethel," and Honor's voice was very husky now, "you don't know how hard it is to do right."

"If they don't know, then it must be because they have never tried to do right," Mr. Royalston said, while he looked gravely at the young girls.

"You are not called upon to judge me, Cousin Vaughn," Janet said haughtily. "I dare say I try quite as hard as some other people to be good. I must say though—" and her lip curled scornfully—" that I don't think much of a repentance that tries to produce dramatic effects before a gentleman."

"Oh," that little word, as it escaped from Honor's lips, sounded like the cry of a hurt child.

With a face more pained than angry Mr. Royalston looked at his cousin.

"'We do pray for mercy,
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy.'"

he said slowly, and then he turned to Honor.

"Miss Montgomery," he said, "Aunt Esther wishes to see you in the dining-room, as soon as you are through here."

Glad to escape, Honor picked up the flowers she had dropped and hurried to the dining-room. She found Mrs. Pennock there examining the silver and glass already arranged on the table.

"Honor," Mrs. Pennock said, while she took off her spectacles and gave them a little extra rub, "I don't think the goblets look as clear as they might. Why, what has happened?" she asked the next moment, as she replaced her spectacles and caught sight of Honor's face.

Honor gave the old answer, that always means so much and tells so little—"Nothing."

"Then there has certainly been 'much ado about nothing,'" Mrs. Pennock said shrewdly. "Honor, have you and those two foolish girls been quarrelling again?"

"They only told me the truth," Honor confessed.

"Well, if that is so, you ought to be grateful to them," Mrs. Pennock said calmly. "The

mirror in which we see ourselves as others see us, is worth paying a good deal for, Honor."

Honor made no reply; she found a soft towel and began to polish the transparent cut glass goblets, but her thoughts were far away from her work, and in a few minutes she asked: "Mrs. Pennock, will Janet and Ethel stay here much longer?"

"I don't know," Mrs. Pennock answered.
"I am in no hurry for them to go; are you?"

Honor did not speak immediately. "I wish, while they stay, you would give me work that would keep me from coming in contact with them," she ventured at last to say.

"I shall do no such thing," Mrs. Pennock replied promptly. "Pray, why shouldn't you come in contact with them? Are you three girls like diamonds that cannot touch without cutting each other?"

"I think we act on each other more like light extinguishers," Honor said with a weary sigh. "Mrs. Pennock, I never feel good when I am with the girls, and I don't think I influence them for good."

Mrs. Pennock had finished her inspection of the table, and now she once more adjusted her spectacles and looked at Honor. "Perhaps," she said seriously, "your influence would be better, Honor, if you would obey the beautiful old law, 'Be not evercome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'"

"But that is just what I cannot do," Honor acknowledged sadly. "That overcoming is too hard for me, Mrs. Pennock. Ethel says I am a bitter and an inconsistent Christian, and I am afraid I never shall be anything else, while I have to associate with her and Janet."

"'A bitter and an inconsistent Christian,'"
Mrs. Pennock repeated. "Honor, those words
ought never to be united."

"I know it, but oh, what can I do?" Honor asked tearfully.

Mrs. Pennock's face changed. "Honor," she said tenderly, "a bitter and inconsistent Christian can become sweet-hearted, loving and consistent only as she obeys Christ, takes his sweet yoke of humility upon her, and in his school learns patiently the lessons he appoints her. There—" and obeying a sudden impulse Mrs. Pennock bent down and kissed the tearful face Honor turned toward her—"there must be no more quarrels between yourself and the girls, Honor. What you cannot do in your own strength you can do with Christ's help. Now go and dress; I want you in the parlor when my friends arrive."

An hour later, when Honor opened the parlor door, she found that the guests had already ar-

rived. No one seemed conscious of her entrance, and from the corner into which she quietly slipped she looked with curious interest at the strangers. Mrs. Pennock was sitting near the fire in earnest conversation with an old gentleman and a sweet faced silvery-haired lady. Mr. Royalston and Ethel were entertaining a young girl, Janet was standing in one of the deep bay windows chatting gayly with two gentlemen, while a little girl of six was walking demurely about the room. Presently the little lady's tour of inspection brought her to Honor's corner. She stopped, looked soberly at her for a moment, and then in a serious little voice said, "I don't know you."

Honor was very fond of children, and holding out her hand she said gently; "Then let us try to get acquainted. I am Honor Montgomery, now won't you tell me your name?"

The little girl drew nearer to Honor, and looked at her with innocent and wondering eyes. "Why, I guess we must be 'lations," she said quaintly, "for my name is just like yours."

"You mean that your last name is like mine, don't you?" Honor asked.

"No. I mean both my names. I wouldn't be named like you, if I didn't have both your names, would I?" the little woman asked wisely.

"No, I suppose not," Honor answered, "but," she asked in surprise, "you don't mean, do you, that your name is Honor Montgomery?"

"Yes, that is just what I do mean," the decided little creature answered. "I wonder," she continued soberly, while her childish eyes studied Honor's face, "I wonder was you named for me."

Honor laughed at the absurd little question. "You are hardly old enough to be my great grandmother, and I was named for her," she said playfully.

At the mention of the word grandmother little Miss Montgomery turned and pointed with her small hand to the lady sitting by Mrs. Pennock. "There's my grandma," she said, and the next instant she had darted across the room and was pulling the lady's sleeve. "Grandma, grandma," she cried in a shrill little voice, "look, there's another Honor Montgomery over there in that corner."

"Another Honor Montgomery," Mrs. Pennock said, "why, yes, Midget, that is true. Come out of your corner, Honor Montgomery, Senior," she ordered pleasantly, "and come here."

With a quietness of manner that covered much secret unwillingness, Honor crossed the room to Mrs. Pennock's side. "You are fond of tracing relationships, Professor," Mrs. Pennock said after she had formally introduced Honor to her guests, "and now I am curious to know where in your family tree you will place this young lady. She has the old family name, you see, Honor Montgomery."

Professor Montgomery looked more surprised than pleased. He scanned Honor closely for a second, and then he asked abruptly, "Do you know from whom you get your first name, Miss Montgomery?"

- "From my great grandmother," Honor answered.
- "Ye-es." Whether that little assenting word denoted pleasure, or its opposite, it would have been difficult for any of the professor's hearers to decide. "Are you a native of this part of the state," he asked slowly.
- "No," Honor answered. "I was born in Broadfields, Long Island."
- "Did you ever have any connections on Long Island, Professor?" Mrs. Pennock asked now.
 - "No, never," Professor Montgomery replied.
- "Are you positive?" Mr. Royalston, who had joined the group around the two Honors, asked now. "Pray, why may not some member of your family, Professor, have been blown by one of fortune's winds on to Long Island, and taken root there?"

Professor Montgomery fastened his eyes once more on Honor, and was silent a moment, then he said slowly: "Of course, there is no reason why what you suggest may not have actually occurred, Mr. Royalston. But—"he continued in a quicker and more confident voice—"after all the care I have taken to trace my family in all its branches, I consider the possibility you suggest very unlikely. My dear," and he looked at his wife, "I cannot understand how the Long Island Montgomerys, could have been forgotten or lost sight of, if they belong to us. I thought," he added in a troubled soliloquy, "I thought my tree was perfect."

Mrs. Montgomery laughed pleasantly. "The professor," she explained to the little company, "is a devoted student of genealogy; and for years he has been at work on a family tree. He has taken the greatest pains to trace all the remote branches of his family, and this past summer he had his tree engraved. Now it hangs in front of his chair in our library; and next to his family Bible," she concluded with a smile at her husband, "I do believe the professor prizes that tree."

"As I ought to do," Professor Montgomery promptly responded. "The man who has no pride in his family, if it is a respectable one, is pretty sure to disgrace it."

"Professor," Mr. Royalston asked now, "how does it happen that your little granddaughter is named Honor? It is not a common name."

"She inherited it, it is a family name," Professor Montgomery answered quickly.

"Honor appears to have been a favorite name in the different Montgomery families," observed the younger of the two gentlemen who in company with Janet had now approached the fire.

"It is, at least, an odd coincidence," quietly

remarked the older man.

Mrs. Pennock's bright eyes twinkled sharply through her spectacles. "You are sure," she said with a good deal of emphasis, "that you have not, by some accident, overlooked the Long Island Montgomerys? You are sure that there is no place for this Honor Montgomery in your family tree, Professor?"

Professor Montgomery looked troubled. He was a man of hobbies and his family tree was very near his heart. "I don't see," he began in an annoyed and uncertain voice, "I really don't see how a mistake in my tree can have been made."

"Pardon me," skilfully interposed the elder of the two strange gentlemen, "but I feel a lawyer's interest in this case. Mrs. Pennock, will you introduce me to your young friend, and may I ask her one or two questions?"

"Yes, certainly," Mrs. Pennock answered; and in another minute Honor, who felt very much like an unwilling witness in a court-room, learned that her new examiner's name was Ketcham, and that he was entitled Judge.

"Miss Montgomery," the judge said easily, "every thing that seems at all unusual or mysterious is to a lawyer as attractive as a mousehole is to a cat. Puss will never abandon that hole until convinced that there is nothing there that she can catch, and a lawyer is never willing to leave a mystery until he has at least attempted to solve it. Now will you please tell me if your ancestors were all born on Long Island?"

- "I don't know," Honor answered. "My father was an only child, and I do not remember ever hearing him speak of his family or relations."
- "And you do not know where the grandmother, who bequeathed you her name, lived?"
 - " No," Honor said.
- "And you have no such thing in your possession as a family tree? nor any records by which you could trace your ancestry back for a few generations, if not quite to the deck of the Mayflower?" the judge smilingly asked.
 - "No," Honor answered again; and then a

sudden recollection made her add—not very intelligibly—"at least—I don't know."

"Ah!" Judge Ketcham said quickly, "I see you have, possibly, some old family records. Now—out of pity for my curiosity—will you let us see them?"

"I can not," Honor said. "If there are any such records, they are stored with other things in Broadfields."

A shadow that denoted disappointment just crossed Judge Ketcham's face. "Could you not send for those old records?" he asked. "You see," he added in a lighter tone, "I am like puss, Miss Montgomery, I want to catch my mouse."

"No," Honor answered, with a little tone of annoyance in her voice, "I can not send for them, and if I could they would prove of very little consequence."

"Probably you are right," Judge Ketcham returned, "but still consequences are apt to be like the unknown quantities in algebraic problems: it is never wise to pronounce them either small or great, until we know all that led to them and may result from them."

"Excuse me," Mr. Royalston, who had been an interested listener to the judge's catechism, said now, "but may I ask why you are so much interested in Miss Montgomery's ancestry, Judge Ketcham?" Judge Ketcham laughed carelessly. "Oh," he said evasively, "a true lawyer is always a good deal of a detective; the thing he does not know he always wants to search out. I am sorry—"and he turned to Professor Montgomery—"that I have not been able to learn anything satisfactory from Miss Montgomery. But for the present, at least, Professor, your tree is safe."

Professor Montgomery's face brightened. "I have had no fears for its safety," he said with dignity; "but at the same time," and he smiled pleasantly at Honor, "I beg Miss Montgomery to believe that I would gladly give her a place in my tree, if I could be convinced that the Long Island Montgomerys belonged to my family."

This whole coversation had been very trying to Honor, and now, with a proud little gesture, she said: "It is of no consequence, I assure you; I am quite content with my own family."

During the general laugh that followed that little speech dinner was announced, and to Honor's great relief her ancestors were allowed once more to rest in their obscurity.

That day, which, in ways she little dreamed of was destined to influence all her future life, was a checkered one for Honor. More than once

during the long dinner, with its elegant service and brilliant conversation, Judge Ketcham turned to her with some pleasant remark; and when after the dinner the little company assembled in the library, through Mr. Royalston's kind efforts and the judge's attention, Honor was soon drawn out of her corner, and for a little while there was no shadow on her innocent enjoyment. She had forgotten everything that was unpleasant, when just at dusk Janet gave her a sharp reminder.

"Honor," she said in the midst of a gay laugh over one of the girl's bright speeches, "your wit is brilliant, I know, but it can hardly fill the place of an illuminator, and I wish you would attend to your duty and light the lamps."

Honor sprang up. "I am glad you reminded me; I had quite forgotten them," she said pleasantly. The library lamps were soon lighted, and then Honor passed into the adjoining parlor. As she stood there by the centre table the voices in the library were very distinct, and she could not avoid hearing Judge Ketcham's niece, Miss Hudson, ask, "Who is that Miss Montgomery, Janet?"

Honor's fingers trembled as she adjusted the lamp shade. She wanted and yet dreaded to hear Janet's answer. It was short and scornful.

- "Only one of Aunt Esther's servants."
- "A servant?" Honor heard Judge Ketcham exclaim.
- "Yes, one of Aunt Esther's hired servants; but she has unusual privileges, for Aunt Esther—who never does things like other people—has taken a great fancy to her."
- "Janet," Mr. Royalston said sternly, "why do you not tell the whole truth about Miss Montgomery?"
- "Because I do not consider further information necessary," Janet said defiantly.
- "Nor is it," Judge Ketcham said in his most positive manner. "Our position often has to be announced for us, but our character will always speak for itself."

Honor did not hear that last remark. She had finished lighting the lamps in the parlor and with noiseless steps she went out into the hall. Her cheerfulness for that evening was gone. She was glad that preparations for supper furnished her with an excuse for not returning to the library, and after the supper she went into a little room that opened out of the dining-room. An old cabinet organ stood in one corner. Honor knew that no one in the parlor or library could hear her; she felt secure from all intrusions, and opening the organ in a sad and almost aimless fashion she let her fingers

wander over the keys. Presently she took up a song she had found one day when examining a pile of old music. The pathos of the words had touched her fancy then, and now she played a slow sad accompaniment, and then in a voice that quivered with tears, sang softly:

"Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years; I am so weary of toil and of tears,—
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain,—
Take them, and give me my childhood again.
I have grown weary of dust and decay,—
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away;
Weary of sowing for others to reap;—
Rock me to sleep, mother,—rock me to sleep.

Mother, dear mother, the years have been long Since I last listened your lullaby song; Sing, then, and unto my soul it shall seem Womanhood's years have been only a dream. Clasped to your heart in a loving embrace, With your light lashes just sweeping your face, Never hereafter to wake or to weep;—Rock me to sleep, mother,—rock me to sleep."

"Don't," exclaimed some one behind her, as her voice trembled on the last word, "don't."

Honor turned in confusion; Professor Montgomery stood back of her chair.

"You must pardon my intrusion," he said.
"I found my way to the dining-room in quest of a glass of water, and then the music drew me here. It sounded very sweetly; but it is

hard for me to understand why young girls, like yourself, take pleasure in singing such morbid and sentimental songs. Do you know why you do it?"

"I suppose because they chime well with our

feelings," Honor answered sadly.

"Chime well with your feelings," the professor exclaimed. "Do you want me to understand that your feelings are as false to life and truth, as the words of that song? What can induce a bright young girl to take such a morbid view of life?"

Though the professor spoke earnestly, his eyes were smiling, and Honor could not help trying to answer him. "I suppose because life does not seem to promise us much," she said soberly.

"Life doesn't promise you much," the professor echoed, "you a mere child, with all the years and their grand possibilities before you. My little girl, such morbid, sentimental fancies ought to have no more place in your mind, than sighs have in a bird's song. Here, let me take that piece of music, if you please."

Blushingly Honor handed him the music, and walking to the lamp, the professor ran it over.

"Let me see," he said, "what verse did I hear you sing?—Oh, this——"

[&]quot;'I have grown weary of dust and decay-

How can you dare to sing such twaddle, when every nerve in your body is thrilling with exquisite life?" he demanded in a parenthesis.

"' Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away-

Bah," and the professor looked frowningly at Honor. "Do you really believe that you have ever thrown the wealth of your soul away? do you even begin to know what your soul's-wealth is? I trow not. But what is this next thing you are weary of? Ah—"

" 'Weary of toiling for others to reap-'

Such selfish cries come with a good grace, from one whose whole life has been full of blessings bestowed by others, don't they?" And once more the professor frowned at Honor.

She could not answer him, and he went ruthlessly on.

- "What was that last desirable thing I heard you imploring? Oh this——"
 - "'Never here after to wake or to weep, Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to to sleep."

"Child," and now Professor Montgomery laid the music on the organ, and his voice, though still earnest, grew very gentle. "Let an old man, who has had a wide and deep experience in life, and tasted most of its joys and sorrows, and learned that both come from a Father's hand and are alike blessings, beg you never to be so false to the possibilities of your life, the memory of your mother, and the love of your Father in heaven as to wish for death. And now," and Professor Montgomery's manner changed again. "Do you know the grand old German hymn, 'All good saints praise the Lord'?"

"No? Well, I hardly supposed you did, but do you know, 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled'? Play me that, or anything that is full of life and triumph, just to get the memory of that wish-to-die-morbidness out of our minds."

Fortunately Honor knew several of the fine old Scotch airs the professor loved. She played them with spirit, and the professor listened and approved. Then he sat down in an easy chair, that stood invitingly near the organ, and drew Honor into a pleasant conversation.

The talk, that both found interesting, lasted until Norah interrupted it, with a request for instructions for the next morning; and then the professor walked thoughtfully back to the library.

"I have been getting acquainted with my namesake, Miss Montgomery," he explained to the group gathered about the fire.

"Well?" Mrs. Pennock said interrogatively.

"Well," he responded, "I would be willing to give her a place in my tree—if she only had a right to be there.—The family she does belong to ought to be proud of her. She is worth knowing."

CHAPTER XIII.

WORDS WITH MEANINGS.

"What boots it to repeat,

How time is skipping underneath our feet?

Unborn to-morrow and dead yesterday—

Why fret about them if to-day be sweet?

Know'st thou yesterday, its aim and reason.

Work'st thou well to-day for worthy things?

Then calmly wait the morrow's hidden season.

And fear not thou what hap soe'er it brings."

—Translated from the Persian.

THE next morning, when Honor while dressing glanced at her little calendar, she was surprised to find that it was the first day of November; but when she looked out of her window she saw that through the night the bright beauty of October had departed, and that the fields and hills were wrapped already in November's gray mantle. A "surly blast" was fast stripping the trees, and a cold and steady rain was pitilessly beating down the few flowers, that until then had lingered courageously in the sheltered garden. With a sigh Honor turned from her window. She anticipated another very busy morning-for Mrs. Pennock's guests were not to leave until night, (227)

and she wondered nervously to what new humilitation Janet would succeed in subjecting her before the day was over. With a longing for a strength greater than she possessed, she took up her Bible. Slowly, in her search for some word just suited to her need, she turned the pages, until her eyes rested on the charge to Timothy-" Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." There was a strong and martial ring about those words, but strength just then was what she needed. In a spirit that though weak was willing to obey, she read that stern command, and while she lingered ever it, she remembered those other words, that have in them the promise of all sufficiency for all our wants-"Lo, I am with you alway." Her need for that hour was satisfied; and with the tranquil mind that comes from trusting in a power greater than our own, she left her room.

As often happens, what she anticipated did not come to pass, and when, as they left the breakfast table, she extended her hand for the card she had learned to consider indispensable to her day's work, Mrs. Pennock smilingly shook her head.

"No," she said, "I have nothing for you this morning. I can trust you, I am sure, to attend to the few things that you know you

must do to-day; but I shall give you no extra duties, for I wish you to spend as much time as possible with my friends in the parlor."

"But I am not needed there," Honor said quickly, "and indeed, Mrs. Pennock, I would rather work."

"You are needed where I want you," Mrs. Pennock, replied, "and to-day I want you in the parlor. You are a foolish child," she added kindly, as she watched Honor's sober face. "You don't know what is for your own good."

"But I am sure I know where it is easiest for me to be good," Honor ventured to answer.

"Nonsense," Mrs. Pennock said emphatically. "Goodness that depends upon place is about as real, as beauty that depends upon paint. If your goodness is not firm enough to bear the strain of any place, it is like an old chair that has to be propped against the wall in order to stand straight. Now go about your work," she ordered pleasantly, "and remember it is the spirit within us, more than the circumstances about us, that makes it easy or hard for us to be good."

A good deal ashamed of the weakness that had occasioned Mrs. Pennock's reproof, Honor went resolutely about her usual morning tasks. They were soon performed, and then with much secret reluctance she took her little work-

basket and went to the parlor. She found all the family assembled there, and all interested in a game that Judge Ketcham was explaining.

"You are just in time, Miss Montgomery," he said kindly. "We are obliged this rainy morning to manufacture our own sunshine, and so we are going to play a game called 'Opinions.' Some subject is proposed, each person present expresses an opinion, and the best opinion will be entitled to a prize. Mrs. Pennock has promised to act as umpire, the prize," and he held up a dainty little book, "is to be this volume of choice poems by Rowland Sill, and the subject or question-" Judge Ketcham paused and looked smilingly at his hearers—"well, that is not yet decided. Ladies and gentlemen, who will give us a subject worthy of our thoughtful consideration this morning?"

"Let's discuss the weather," Ethel said.
"That is a subject everybody has some opinion about."

Judge Ketcham shook his head. "That would be offering a prize to ignorance," he objected. "No one here really knows anything about the weather. The subject we choose must be one we have truly an intelligent idea about."

"Take foot-ball," laughed young Mr.

Ketcham. "Ought that game to be classed with bull-fights for its barbarity, or does it deserve the serious attention bestowed on it in our best schools and colleges?"

"No," quietly vetoed Mrs. Montgomery, "some of us do not understand foot-ball, and we are only prejudiced for or against it."

"Then take the North pole;" gravely suggested Professor Montgomery. "Is its discovery worth the sacrificing of any more noble lives?"

"I am not scientific enough to have any intelligent opinion on that subject," Miss Hudson laughingly confessed.

"Let's discuss art," said Janet. "Are the painters of to-day inferior to the old masters?"

- "You make me think of the old line, 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread,' Janet," Mrs. Pennock said with a little frown. "Because you can sketch a tree so that we can recognize it, it does not follow that you have any right to express an opinion about the subject you have proposed."
- "Why not take literature?" said Mrs. Montgomery. "Are our greatest writers our most helpful ones?"
- "They ought to be, if they are not," Mr. Royalston said quietly.
 - "Oh don't," Miss Hudson exclaimed, "don't

discuss books; we will be just like people walking on stilts in a few minutes, if we do."

"Well," Mr. Royalston said, when the laugh that followed Miss Hudson's remark had subsided, "since the weather, games, art, science, and literature, are all beyond our powers of discussion, let us take a question that bears on every-day life, and endeavor to decide what constitutes a lady."

"That is a question we certainly ought to have intelligent opinions about," Judge Ketcham replied. "Guy—" and he turned to his son—" suppose we begin with you. What in your opinion makes a lady?"

Young Mr. Ketcham laughed. "I shall have to answer you in poetry," he said, "my own powers of description are too prosaic. I have always thought these lines by Lowell very beautiful:

"'She doeth little kindnesses,
Which most leave undone, or despise;
For naught that sets one heart at ease,
And giveth happiness or peace,
Is low-esteemed in her eyes.'"

"Very good, Guy," Judge Ketcham said approvingly. "Who comes next? shall we speak in course? then, Miss Ethel, I think you must give us your opinion."

Ethel blushed and played with her finger

rings. "My lady has white hands; she knows nothing about work, except its name," she said self-consciously.

"Then she is a pretty useless bit of humanity," Mrs. Pennock said brusquely.

Judge Ketcham laughed. "Before we get through," he said, "I suspect we shall find that as there are men of many minds, so there are ladies of many kinds. Who speaks next? Will you, Niece Fanny?"

Miss Hudson hesitated. "Won't the old definition of politeness apply?" she asked. "Doesn't a lady do and say the kindest things in the kindest ways?"

"She fails to prove her right to her title, if she does not," Judge Ketcham answered. "You come now, Miss Janet. What is your lady like?"

"She is all that beauty, wealth, family, and position can make her," Janet said promptly.

"Then she is simply made by her circumstances," Mr. Royalston observed. "If that is your ideal lady, Janet, you are easily satisfied. You can find such ladies every where."

"Well, if you don't like my ideal, suppose you give me yours," Janet said sharply.

"All in good time," Judge Ketcham interposed. "My friend, Mrs. Montgomery, speaks now."

Mrs. Montgomery dropped the soft wools she was knitting, and looked up with a gentle smile. "My lady is like the old tapestry workers," she said sweetly. "She copies the pattern before her, and that pattern is—Christ."

There was a moment's pause; then with a gentle inclination of his head to Mrs. Montgomery, the judge turned to her husband.

"It ought to be very easy, Professor, for you to define a lady," he said gravely.

"To know her makes the joy and blessedness of life," the professor answered, while his eyes rested tenderly on his wife's face.

"It is beautiful to see lovers who have celebrated their golden wedding," Janet said with a light laugh; but her words seemed to annoy Judge Ketcham, and he turned hastily to Honor.

"It is your turn now, Miss Montgomery," he said pleasantly.

Honor did not look up. Her cheeks were flushed and her voice was low, but her audience caught every word.

"I find my lady's portrait in the Bible," she said. "'She vaunteth not herself; is not puffed up; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked."

"She wears the 'white flower of a perfect life' then," Judge Ketcham said almost reverently. "Now, Mr. Royalston, the last ought to be the best."

"It cannot be that," Mr. Royalston said with emphasis, "but if you will, you may know my lady." And with eyes that smiled, and lips a little moved from their usual firm repose he repeated,

"'This is to my lady's praise;
Shame before her is shamed;
Hate cannot hate repeat
She is so pure of ways;
There is no sin is named
But falls before her feet,
Because she is so frankly free,
So tender, and so good to see,
Because she is so sweet.""

"Have you found that lady yet, Mr. Royalston?" young Mr. Ketcham asked laughingly. Mr. Royalston's face was as grave as if he had just demonstrated a proposition in Euclid.

"Listen," he said, "Mrs. Pennock is going to speak." Mrs. Pennock leaned forward, took the little volume of poems from the table, and held it in her hand.

"With two exceptions," she said with a smile, "I approve of all the opinions given, and where all are good it is often difficult to choose the best, but I award the prize to Honor Montgomery because—"

"Go on, Aunt Esther," Janet said curtly as Mrs. Pennock paused, "let us know why Honor has surpassed us all."

"Because," Mrs. Pennock said, while she looked soberly at Janet, "'We needs must love the highest when we see it," and Honor has shown us the highest ideal drawn from the highest source."

"Oh," Janet said scornfully, "I supposed we were to try to describe what the world acknowledges to be a real lady. I did not know that the impossible ideals of the poets and the Bible were what you wanted."

"We wanted your true opinion," Judge Ketcham replied, "didn't you give us that, Miss Janet?"

"Yes," Janet said, defiantly, "I did: and you may go the world over, and I believe you will always find that only the women who possess wealth, family, and position are considered ladies. Of course, though," she continued while she shot a scornful glance at Honor-"it is all very well for those, who possess neither family, nor wealth, to quote the Bible, and try to prove that in order to be a lady one has only to be religious. There is one comfort; no one is ever really deceived by such pretensions," she added bitterly.

"There was one definition I think you for-

got to give," Mrs. Pennock said in quiet voice, "a true lady never selfishly wounds another's feelings. Janet—" and she held out the book—" Will you give this to Honor?"

Janet did not dare to refuse. She took the little volume and walked to the window where Honor was sitting.

"I hope you will always quote the Bible as successfully," she said with an unpleasant laugh, as she dropped the book into Honor's lap.

The pained look in Honor's face deepened. Janet had ruthlessly destroyed all her happiness in receiving the pretty prize, and it seemed impossible for her to look up and express her thanks for it.

Perhaps Mr. Royalston divined her feelings. "May I look at your prize, Miss Honor?" he asked. "There was the insight of a true poet in Rowland Sill," he continued, as he turned the pages of the little book. "Do any of you know 'The Fool's Prayer'? There was a little chorus of "Noes," and saying, "It is worth your knowing then," Mr. Royalston read aloud:—

[&]quot;The royal feast was done, the King Sought some new sport to banish care, And to his jester cried; 'Sir Fool, Kneel now, and make for us a prayer.'

- "The jester doffed his cap and bells,
 And stood the mocking court before;
 They could not see the bitter smile
 Behind the painted grin he wore.
- "He bowed his head, and bent his knee Upon the monarch's silken stool; His pleading voice arose; 'O Lord, Be merciful to me, a fool.'
- "No pity, Lord, could change the heart From red with wrong to white as wool; The rod must heal the sin; but, Lord, Be merciful to me, a fool.
- "'Tis not by guilt the onward sweep
 Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
 'Tis by our follies that so long
 We hold the earth from heaven away.
- "These clumsy feet, still in the mire, Go crushing blossoms without end; These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust Among the heart-strings of a friend.
- "The ill-timed truth we might have kept— Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung? The word we had not sense to say— Who knows how grandly it had rung?
- "Our faults no tenderness should ask,
 Thy chastening stripes must cleanse them all:
 But for our blunders—oh, in shame
 Before the eyes of heaven we fall.

'Earth bears no balsam for mistakes; Men crown the knave and scourge the tool That did his will; but thou, O Lord, Be merciful to me, a fool.'

The room was hushed; in silence rose
The King, and sought his gardens cool,
And walked apart, and murmured low,
'Be merciful to me, a fool.'"

"That is fine," Judge Ketcham said, when Mr. Royalston had finished reading. "Miss Montgomery, that little poem alone makes your prize worth owning, I think."

Honor looked up with a faint smile. "I ought to thank you for awarding it to me, Mrs. Pennock," she said in a voice that was far from being joyful.

"I only did my duty as umpire," Mrs. Pennock answered. "But I am glad, my dear, if the book is one you really will care for."

"There is a great deal in that little poem well worth remembering," Professor Montgomery thoughtfully remarked, "There are the lines—

- "'The ill-timed truth we might-have kept—
 Who knows how deep it pierced and stung?
 The word we had not sense to say—
 Who knows how grandly it had rung?'"
- "Miss Janet," he said gravely to Janet who was sitting near him, "those words treasured

in our minds, might often help us to remember when we ought to speak and when to be silent."

Janet looked annoyed. "I am not afraid of the truth," she said proudly.

"Nor ever afraid of hurting others with it?" Judge Ketcham, who had heard her answer, asked now. Janet had an uncomfortable consciousness that there was a motive in Judge Ketcham's question.

"They must take the consequences, if they put themselves in positions where the truth can hurt them," she said in a cold nulovely voice.

Judge Ketcham studied her face a moment. "I congratulate you, that 'The Fool's Prayer' was not awarded to you," he said meaningly as he turned away.

Janet's face flushed and darkened as she saw him cross the room to Honor's chair. It would have been hard for Janet to explain, even to herself, her reasons for disliking Honor. Her parents were wealthy, she was an only daughter, and all her wishes were gratified. It did not seem possible for Honor's life ever to come in conflict with hers. But Janet was conscious that Honor's aims were higher than her own, and, strange though it may seem, she was jealous of the very struggles and efforts Honor made to conquer her faults and to do right. It

embitterd her, too, to see the interest her aunt and cousin manifested in Honor, and now the marked notice that Judge Ketcham was taking of her, was to her already intense envy like gall poured upon wormwood.

Her scornful words about Honor's position in the family had evidently failed to influence any of her aunt's visitors against her. They could see plainly in what light Mrs. Pennock regarded her; and they were willing to receive her as Mrs. Pennock wished. Janet thought it all over in the few minutes that she remained sitting where Judge Ketcham had left her; and in those few minutes she came to the determination that if she had power to accomplish it, Honor should leave her aunt's house. She would not own, even to herself, that her motives were false and contemptible. None are more easily self-deceived than those who do not wish to know their own hearts, and now Janet found it easy to quiet her conscience with the thought that Honor ought to be more ambitious for herself, and that it would be a kindness to place her somewhere in a better position than she filled in Mrs. Pennock's household.

Fortunately we cannot read the minds of others, and Honor that day was very far from suspecting Janet's unkind intentions. About noon the storm cleared away, the gray of the

morning changed to the golden tints of a late autumn day, and Mrs. Pennock proposed to give her friends a long drive before taking them to the railroad station. Soon after dinner the carriage came to the door; there was the little bustle in the house that usually precedes a departure, and in the height of it Judge Ketcham found his way to Honor.

"I suppose, Miss Montgomery," he said in a pleasant but inconsequential manner, "I suppose, if at any time you wanted those old family records, we were talking of yesterday, you could obtain them, could you not?"

"I don't know," Honor answered in surprise. "If there really are any records, I suppose I could find them if necessary."

"Then take an old lawyer's advice, and find them," the judge said with an earnestness his light laugh poorly covered. "Pedigree is not as important as character, but still, we cannot always afford to ignore it." And with another little laugh Judge Ketcham said "good-bye."

CHAPTER XIV.

SELF AND OTHER SELVES.

"It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be ever so fair,
But the love the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care,
In the heart of the deed so fair."

-Anon.

ALWAYS when we close the door on pleasant visitors, the house seems quieter than usual, and our own hearts a little lonelier. And that afternoon, after watching the carriage drive away, when Honor returned to the parlor, it was with a very sober face that she began to arrange the furniture, and give the room its accustomed set-apart-for-company look.

Mrs. Pennock and Mr. Royalston had accompanied their guests. Janet and Ethel had started for a walk, and Honor felt lonely as well as left alone. With "a wish that she hardly dared to own," she thought of her little namesake, and gentle Mrs. Montgomery, and the professor. "Oh dear, I do wish I had relations, and belonged somewhere," she sighed. It is well for us that our morbid inclinations

often have to yield to the stern pressure of duties that must-be-done. Honor would have liked that afternoon to sit down in an easy chair, and indulge in the girlish luxury of a good cry. But there as the old family silver to put back in the safe, and the choice china, that was only used on rare occasions, to replace in the closet; and with a brave effort Honor conquered her sentimental feelings and went resolutely about her tasks.

Work is a great thought brightener; and when after a busy hour, Honor went to her room her face had cleared, and her morbid fancies were all forgotten. Drawing her favorite chair into a sunny window, she took up her little prize, and seated herself to enjoy as she hoped an hour of uninterrupted reading. But she had scarcely opened her book before Norah knocked on her door, and then unceremoniously opened it.

"Indeed, Miss Honor," she said, "it's sorry I be to disturb you, but there is a little boy down-stairs that wants to see the mistress; and I think, maybe if you'll come, it will be the easiest way to get rid of him."

Honor threw down her book, and a little unwillingly followed Norah to the kitchen. A small, bare-footed and ragged boy stood by the range, and looked soberly at her as she approached him.

"Well," Honor said, after waiting a moment for him to make known his errand, "who are you, little boy, and what do you want?"

"I'm Sam," the boy answered while he shuffled awkwardly with his feet, "an' I don't want nothin' for myself, but marm says she wants most everything, an' I guess she's jes' about right."

- "Who is your mother?" Honor asked.
- "She's the widder Black. That's what folks called her where we've come from."
 - "Then you don't live in Pennock Manor?"
- "No, we weren't never here before, but you see marm was sick last summer, an' we was awful poor, and when she got better she said she had relations somewhere, an' she guessed we'd better go to 'em; so we've been trampin' a good while, but we ain't found the relations; I don't believe marm knows the way to 'em; an' now she's sick agin, an' can't go no furder."
- "Where is she?" Honor asked with pitying interest.
- "She's in that old house in the hollow that's most tumbled down. We come to it this mornin', and marm said, there weren't nobody to turn us out, and she guessed we'd better

stop there, for she was jes' tired out an' couldn't go on."

Honor glanced up at the clock. It was half-past three. It was more than a mile to the old house the boy had described; and Honor knew that the twilight of the short autumn afternoon would set in before she could go there and return; and it was a lonely place, too, for Mrs. Pennock's was the nearest house.

For a moment Honor hesitated, and felt selfishly inclined to consider her own comfort and safety, but the next instant pity for the destitute boy conquered her selfishness.

"Wait a moment, and I will go with you to see your mother," she said as she left the kitchen.

She soon returned prepared for her walk.

"Come, I am ready now," she said; but to her surprise Sam looked at her with evident disapproval, and remained standing by the range.

"Why don't you come, I am in a hurry?" Honor said sharply.

The boy did not move. "'Cause I—" he began slowly, and then, gaining confidence, he asked impetuously, "ain't you goin' to take nothin' for her to eat? She ain't had nothin' to eat sense yesterday, an' she said she b'lieved she was starvin'."

Honor's voice was full of compassion as she turned to the cook. "I am sure Mrs. Pennock would want me to take her something," she said.

"Indeed and she wouldn't be Mrs. Pennock then if she didn't," the cook answered, as she brought a small basket and began to fill it. It was soon ready, and taking it up Honor started after the boy, who with his hands full of bread and butter had run on ahead. He had reached the poor old hovel and was standing in the door-way when she arrived.

"Well, you be a slow walker, ain't you," he said disapprovingly. "I guess," he added as he threw a glance over his shoulder into the room beyond, "you had better step quiet as you can, 'cause marm looks as if she might be asleep."

With the low promise, "I'll be quiet," Honor brushed by the boy, and entered the only room in the wretched house. She stopped on the threshold, dismayed by the scene before her. All that she knew of destitution and extreme poverty she had learned from books, and now as she glanced about her, her heart ached and a pitiful moisture dimmed her eyes.

There was no furniture and no fire in the room; the floor was bare and dirty, and the one window was curtained with cobwebs and full of

broken panes of glass. In one corner, wrapped in a ragged shawl, with her head pillowed on a small bundle, lay the sick woman. Her face was turned toward the wall, and she neither looked round nor stirred at Honor's approach.

"She's asleep, ain't she?" Sam whispered.

Honor nodded. "I think she must be," she said softly.

The room seemed very chilly and damp, and perceiving that there was a fireplace Honor asked: "Can't you find something to make a fire of?"

"Marm wanted a fire this mornin'," Sam answered dolefully, "but we ain't got no matches."

Honor felt discouraged; after all her self-denying efforts to be of use, there seemed to be nothing for her to do. "Does your mother always sleep so soundly?" she asked after she had waited some minutes.

"No. Most times she wakes if I jes' stir," Sam said; "but marm 'lowed this mornin' that she was drefful tired; an' drefful tired folks allus do sleep sound, don't they?"

"Yes, I suppose so," Honor replied, while a nervous fear, she could not explain, made her long for help and some other companion than that ignorant boy.

"I wish we had a doctor here," she said in a moment.

"Marm ain't never been no hand to have doctors," Sam said with a wise nod of his head, "but she did go to one last summer, an' he told her he guessed there was trouble here," and as he spoke the boy laid his hand upon his heart.

Honor grew pale as she listened to the boy's innocent statement. She stood a moment irresolute, and then she stooped and laid her hand on the woman's arm.

"Mrs. Black," she called gently, but no answer came. With a fear that she could not bear to express in words, Honor left the woman's side, and walked once or twice slowly across the room. Then she went back and looked once more at the motionless figure. She waited a minute, and then she laid her own warm hand on the still face. It was cold and no breath came from the parted lips.

Honor drew back. She knew now that the quiet sleeper would never again feel weariness or pain; but she could not tell the unconscious boy. With a stern effort she suppressed all signs of emotion.

"Sam," she said, while she felt in her pocket for a lead pencil, "can you find me a piece of paper?"

"Ain't got no paper, but this," Sam said, as he took a circus advertisement out of his pocket.

With a trembling hand Honor grasped the coarse handbill and wrote on the margin: "This boy's mother is dead; please send help."

"Carry this to the house I came from, and say it is for Mrs. Pennock," she said as she folded the paper. "It is for your mother," she explained, as the boy looked doubtfully at her; "I want help for her. Go as fast as you can."

Sam nodded and darted off. Honor stood in the open door and watched him until he was out of sight; then a sudden and almost appalling sense of loneliness came over her. She could not remain in that silent room, and drawing her shawl closer about her, she closed the door of the house, and stepped out into the little weed-choked garden. The short autumn day was just closing, and in the west the sky was all aglow with the rich gold of a November sunset. Honor walked down the little foot-path and leaned over the broken gate. The house stood by itself on a retired road; no sound of life came to her ears, but a low wind just stirred the branches of the old pear tree that stood by the gate, and every now and then a withered leaf drifted slowly down and rested at her feet.

The peaceful silence soothed and strengthened the excited girl. In that solemn hush, when nature seemed kneeling at her evening prayer, it was not hard to leave the poor, bare life that had just closed in God's hands. But presently a new thought made Honor tremble and grow sick at heart.

What did it mean, this wretchedness and destitution? Whose fault was it that one of God's children had known such cruel want, while others had more than they could use of this world's good gifts? Was it true that our lives were all linked together, and that in God's sight we were all one great family? Had she anything to do in this world, beyond caring for and making the most of herself? And what, with her limited means, and in her shut-in life, could she do to lessen the sobs in the night, and the dropping of tears, and the heart-broken moans that go up continually to God, from his suffering, and ignorant, and sorrowing children?

Honor could not answer her own questions; she could not tell what she could do to lighten the sum of human misery; but in that lonely hour, with the solemn presence of death so near her, she realized, for the first time, that our obligation to help others is only limited by our means to help them, and bowing her head on the old gate-post she prayed as she never had prayed before, not only that God would give her blessings, but that he would make her a blessing.

Slowly the sunset colors faded, and the shadows of twilight gathered, and still Honor lingered by the gate. It was almost dark when Mrs. Pennock accompanied by Mr. Royalston and Sam arrived.

"My poor child," Mrs. Pennock said with unusual tenderness, "I am sorry you have had such a trying experience."

"It must not be prolonged," Mr. Royalston said as he saw Honor's pale face. "Come, Miss Honor, you are not needed here now, and I will take you home."

Home never seemed brighter or dearer to Honor than it did that evening, when she sat resting, in obedience to Mrs. Pennock's wishes, in an easy chair before the library fire. The solemn yet tender hush, that falls upon us after contact with death, seemed to have touched not only Honor, and Mrs. Pennock, and Mr. Royalston, but even Janet and Ethel. They had all been quiet for some time when Mr. Royalston turned smilingly to Honor.

"A red leaf for your thoughts," he said, as he picked up a bright autumn leaf lying on the floor, and tossed it into her lap.

The sad curve of Honor's lips did not change. "I was wondering," she said slowly, as if trying to disentangle her thoughts, "how far we are responsible for the suffering there is in the

world, and how far we ought to deny ourselves in order to relieve it?"

"O Honor," Ethel exclaimed, "don't ask us to consider such questions. You will have us all in the slough of despond very soon if you do."

"There were 'steps' out of the slough of despond," Mr. Royalston said kindly, "and I think if we try, we can find an answer to Miss Honor's questions."

"But after all, what is the use of trying to answer them?" Janet asked. "The world is full of suffering; we all know that, but if, in trying to relieve it, we sacrifice everything we have, it will amount to little more than emptying a doll's tea-pot into the Atlantic. We have ourselves to take care of, and if we do that well I don't think we ought to be expected to do much more."

"What do you think, Aunt Esther?" Mr. Royalston inquired.

Mrs. Pennock dropped her knitting and adjusted her spectacles. Then she folded her hands, as if ready for a long talk, and said calmly:

"I think the answer to the old question, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' will answer Janet now."

"We are apt to think everybody our brother's

keeper save ourselves," Mr. Royalston said soberly.

"But," Honor said in an eager voice, "suppose I acknowledge that I am my brother's keeper, Mr. Royalston, still this question presses; how much ought I to do for him? Suppose I have just money enough to buy myself shoes and stockings, and my brother has neither shoes nor stockings, now what shall I do? How can I supply my own needs, and yet deal generously with my brother?"

Mr. Royalston smiled a little. "The first thing we are to give our brother is our love," he said, "and when we do give him that it will be an easy matter to deal justly and generously with him."

Honor looked both troubled and perplexed. "I know," she said humbly, "that love would solve many of our puzzles; but still, Mr. Royalston, we do owe a duty to ourselves—for God has given us ourselves to take care of—and it is a hard question, how we are to do the best and the most for ourselves, and at the same time the best and the most for others?"

Mr. Royalston was silent a moment; then he asked quietly: "Do you belong to yourself, Miss Honor?"

- "Yes-no," Honor said in a startled voice.
- "The answer to your questions, as well as to

many other hard questions, all depends upon that little fact of ownership," Mr. Royalston said with a grave smile.

"Yes," Mrs. Pennock said quaintly, "it depends upon the image and superscription

stamped upon the tribute money."

"I wish I could understand," Ethel said with an affected laugh. "Please, somebody, tell me; if I don't belong to myself, to whom do I belong?"

"I should say to your Father in heaven," Mr.

Royalston answered.

"O—h!" Ethel exclaimed, "is that what you mean? Why, of course, we all know that we belong to God."

"Then, if you know that, I think you know

your duty," Mr. Royalston said seriously.

"No," Honor insisted, "I am very stupid, I fear; but, Mr. Royalston, in the case I have supposed, I do not know what my duty is."

Mr. Royalston's face and voice changed as he answered Honor. "Miss Honor," he said, "will you tell me how a loving and obedient child can best please a wise and generous father?"

"I suppose," Honor said after a moment's thought, "by making the best use of what the father gives."

"The best use for whom, and for whose sake?" Mr. Royalston asked.

Honor's face brightened as if a sunbeam had touched it. "Oh," she said eagerly, as she caught his meaning, "the child would make the most of herself for the father's sake. I see, Mr. Royalston, I begin to understand."

"Do you?" Mr. Royalston said, with a smile at her eagerness, "then, Miss Honor, I believe now you can be trusted to answer your own questions. I do not think the puzzle about shoes and stockings will perplex you again."

"But it will me," Ethel declared. "You must make your meaning plainer, Mr. Royalston, or I shall never have a new pair of shoes again, without feeling that I am defrauding some poorer person."

"Do you really want to understand my meaning?" Mr. Royalston asked with a little doubt in his tone; "then listen, and I will try to make it clear."

"Don't preach too long a sermon, Vaughn," Janet said daringly; but Mr. Royalston had an earnest word to say now, and he did not heed her.

"We acknowledge, if we are true Christians," he said gravely, "that we belong to God; and we acknowledge, too, that as Christians the one great duty of our life is to adorn the doctrine of our Lord in all things. We can

best adorn that doctrine by striving after perfection in all things, even to the smallest detail. We can best honor God, by making ourselves as his children worthy of honor; and in that spirit we will use the wealth, and all the other advantages God gives us. understand," and Mr. Royalston's words were very emphatic now, "understand that wealth that is held as a trust, to be used 'in his name, and for his sake,' will never be selfishly and unworthily squandered. Shoes-" and Mr. Royalston glanced smilingly at Honor-"books, education, dress suitable for his station, travel, if mind and body can be benefited by it, everything that the Father gives him the means to enjoy, a Christian has a right to enjoy; if the enjoyment will help him to be a more complete and perfect Christian, better fitted to serve and honor his master."

Honor looked a little troubled again. "But after a Christian has done so much for himself, what—usually—will be left for his poorer brother?" she asked in a perplexed voice.

"Are you still troubled over the old question how much is mine, and how much is thine?" Mr. Royalston asked. "Miss Honor, one authoritative answer, that will settle that question for each individual soul, can never be given by any human being. The most unsel-

fish man, who is most sincerely consecrated to his master, may sometimes seem to the world altogether selfish, because it may be both necessary and right for him, in his Master's service, to use every dollar his heavenly Father gives him for and on himself. But usually it is the Christian, who seeks in all things to adorn his profession, who has the most to give his brother; for he allows no waste nor extravagance in his expenditures."

"You are right, Vaughn," Mrs. Pennock said gently, "but now let me make a little practical suggestion. In my opinion, the Christians who give the most and have the most to give are the ones who give systematically. Honor-" and Mrs. Pennock looked at the young girl with eyes that were as kind as they were wise-"your puzzle is one that Christian girls everywhere to-day are trying to work out, and yet it is not a difficult one. God gives to every man according 'to his several ability,' and he asks from every man according to that ability. Your heavenly Father knows, just as well as we know, that the most of your small income you need for your own comfort and well being, and you may be sure, my child, that when God gives you the means for comfort he wishes you to be comfortable. But-" and the little stress Mrs. Pennock laid on that word

made Honor lean forward, forgetful of all around her, to catch what was to follow-" you can be very comfortable, and yet do without many little things, that simply please the eye for a moment, and benefit neither mind nor body. And there, my dear, is your opportunity to be self-denying, and to help your poorer brother. Renounce the useless little trifles, that are really the giants that swallow the dollars, and then set apart a certain portion of your income; I think, where the income is small, the tenth is a good proportion—and give that regularly and systematically to missions and charities. If you follow this plan for one year, I do not believe you ever will give it up."

"I shall like to see her after she has followed it a year," Janet said saucily. "There won't be a ribbon on her dress, nor a feather in her hat; her gowns will all be calico, and her gloves cotton."

Honor laughed merrily. "That is a doleful picture, Janet," she said, "but I don't think it frightens me."

"I hope this letter won't frighten you, either," Mr. Royalston said, as he handed her one Norah had just brought in.

"I must read it before I can be sure of its effect," Honor said brightly, as she glanced at

the address and recognized Miss Clark's chirography. It was months since Honor had heard from her old friend, and it was with sincere pleasure that she opened the envelope and drew out the half sheet of blue foolscap.

MY DEAR HONOR—she quickly read:-

Do you know that it is almost fifteen months since you and I left the dear old home in Broadfields? I didn't think when I said good-bye to you then, that I could live without hearing from and writing to you every month at least; and yet I haven't heard from you in six months, and this is only my second letter to you. Well, you see, Honor, the reason is just here; time goes faster than a steam engine, and every day brings with it things that must be done; and the things we meant to do; well, they are generally the very things we don't do, and when we are in a hurry I don't know of anything we are as apt to leave undone as writing letters, without it is saying our prayers. Honor, I suppose you will think from this that I have been pretty hard at work since I came out here, and you won't make any mistake if you do think so. Really, I don't know which there is the most of in this great western world-work or room-there is so much of both.

Cousin Sabrina and I live together. We agree pretty well, and we get along as comfortably as most folks out here—where nobody don't expect to spend much time in rocking chairs—but you know she is a widow, and there ain't no man on the place, and when a woman's work reaches from the kitchen to the barn, and the hen-house and the wood-house have to come in between, it ain't much wonder, in my opinion, if the work don't never get done. I sometimes wish we had a good boy; I am sure we could make one useful, and if I do say it, that oughtn't to, I do believe a boy in my care would be pretty well off.

But then it ain't no use wishing; for good boys seem to be something like gold dollars—there are plenty of them in the world, and yet they are dreadful hard to get hold of.

Well, Honor, I must say good-bye. I am powerful glad that you have such a good home, and if you will take my advice you will try to keep it, for a good home is just about the best thing this world can give to anyone.

I must not forget to add, what I forgot to say, where I ought to have said it, at the beginning of this letter, that I am well and hope you are enjoying the same blessing. I have no more to say at present, except write soon.

Your faithful friend,

MELINDA CLARK.

"Many old memories were awakened by Miss Clark's letter, and Honor smiled and sighed more than once while reading it; but one thought was uppermost in her mind when she finished it, and as she slowly folded it she asked:

"What is going to be done with Sam?"

Mrs. Pennock looked grave. "God has sent him to us, and we must care for him," she said, "but if 'it is an awkward thing to play with souls,' it is just as awkward and hard a thing to plan a boy's life; and I can make no arrangements for Sam to-night.

"Perhaps God has already arranged for him," Honor said thoughtfully. "Wouldn't a home in the West be desirable for him?"

"If we could find one—in a Christian family," Mrs. Pennock said doubtfully.

With a little smile Honor opened her letter and read Miss Clark's wish for a good boy. "Don't the need and the supply meet here," she asked.

Mrs. Pennock nodded. "It does look like a Providence guide-post," she said quaintly.

"You had better follow it," Mr. Royalston advised.

"I'll make sure, first, that it is what it looks like," Mrs. Pennock said; "but, Honor, you may write to Miss Clark and ask her if she is willing to take a boy whose goodness is an unknown quantity."

Miss Clark's answer to that question was prompt and satisfactory; and in a few days the boy—whose history was like his goodness—arrived at his Western home.

CHAPTER XV.

A TURN-A-ROUND.

"For patience when the rough winds blow,
For patience when our hopes are fading,
When visible things all backward go
And nowhere seems the power of aiding;
God still enfolds thee with his viewless hand,
And leads thee surely to the Fatherland."

—M. L. Frothingham.

MISS HONOR, Miss Honor; are you awake?"

It was early in the morning, and Honor was still dreaming happily, when Norah's voice aroused her.

"Yes," she answered, as she sprang up and opened her door. "What is the matter?"

"Oh an' indeed, Miss Honor, we are in lots of trouble, for Maggie's sick, an' I'm sure I don't know who's to cook the breakfast, for I can't."

"Well, I can," Honor answered cheerfully. "Don't disturb Mrs. Pennock. I will attend to everything."

Honor's confidence in herself was wellfounded. In the months she had been with Mrs. Pennock she had changed from an ignorant girl to a competent housekeeper. One new duty after another had been wisely laid upon her by Mrs. Pennock, and she was not only well-read in her receipt books now, but she knew how to make practical use of her knowledge. The breakfast that morning was a great success, but no one suspected that Honor had been filling Maggie's place, and she listened to the praises bestowed upon her muffins and coffee and maintained a demure silence.

Maggie's illness, though not serious, made her for several days unfit for her work, and through those days Honor, with much secret satisfaction, continued to reign over the sauce pans. She did her work with thoroughness and skill, and she felt well-rewarded when one morning at breakfast Mr. Royalston remarked unsuspectingly:

"Aunt Esther, I think Maggie must have been attending a cooking-school lately. Nothing could be lighter than her rolls this morning, unless, indeed, her waffles last night surpassed them."

"Maggie indeed," Mrs. Pennock said playfully. "Much do you know about my culinary arrangements, Vaughn. Maggie is ill, and you have not eaten a thing cooked by her in three days."

"Maggie ill," exclaimed Janet and Ethel together, "why we didn't know it."

"It was not necessary that you should know it," Mrs. Pennock replied coolly. "When things get a little awry in the kitchen, a good housekeeper doesn't blow a trumpet, and proclaim her troubles from the house roof."

"Well," Janet said, "I think we will have to admit that you are a good housekeeper, Aunt Esther, for at home, when the cook fails the whole family has to put on sackcloth and sit down in dust and ashes. But how could you fill Maggie's place so easily?"

"Ask Honor," Mrs. Pennock answered.

"Honor," Ethel exclaimed; "why Honor, do you know how to cook?"

"Since every mouthful you have eaten in the last three days has been prepared by Honor, I thing she may truthfully answer your question in the affirmative," Mrs. Pennock said.

"Did you know how to cook when you came here, Honor?" Janet asked in a moment.

"No," Honor answered with a grateful glance at Mrs. Pennock, "all I know I have learned under Mrs. Pennock's kind instruction."

A curious look crossed Janet's face. "You ought to graduate soon," she said, "and some other ignorant girl ought to have the benefit of Aunt Esther's teachings."

Mr. Royalston, who had opened his paper, glanced up as Janet spoke and gave her a keen look, but Honor only smiled.

"I don't want to graduate," she said gratefully, "I only want to remain in my present school and go on studying and improving."

Once more that curious expression crossed Janet's face. For days she had been wondering how she could accomplish her purpose, and spirit Honor out of her aunt's house. Now the morning's conversation had suggested a plan to her active mind, and she resolved if possible to act upon it. Though she knew that she was jealous of her aunt's regard for Honor, she was not honest enough to own as much even to herself. And though she would gladly have availed herself of an opportunity—if one had offered-to prejudice Mrs. Pennock against Honor, still she felt that she should be better satisfied with herself, if she could manage to send Honor from Pennock Manor in such a way that she would seem to be considering only her best interests.

When we have once determined to do a mean thing the way to do it will soon offer; and Janet, when a little later that morning she received a letter from her mother, congratulated herself that all things seemed to be working together for the accomplishment of her scheme.

She had expected in a few days to return to her home in the city, but now her mother wrote that business would call her father South in December, and they had decided to close their house and spend the winter in Florida. Janet had been South, she did not care now to accompany her parents; and soon with an ingenuity that was skillful, if not praiseworthy, she had her designs all satisfactorily arranged in her own mind.

"Aunt Esther," she said that afternoon, when she found Mrs. Pennock alone in the library, "Aunt Esther, I want to ask a very great favor of you."

Janet was her sister's only daughter, and Mrs. Pennock was very fond of her. Yet she was not blind to her faults, and she often felt doubtful of her sincerity. Now she studied her face for a moment, and then she said coolly, "Well, you can ask."

Janet felt that her aunt's mood was not a very propitious one, but she would not be daunted. "Aunt Esther," she began, "don't you think that every young girl ought to be educated in housekeeping affairs as well as in books?"

Janet had skillfully touched one of Mrs. Pennock's pet theories. "Of course I do," she replied promptly. "If a girl is going to be mar-

ried, and have a home to make happy, she had much better—if she must choose between the two—know how to make good bread than how to read Greek."

"That is just what I think, Aunt Esther," Janet said meekly, "and I feel very badly when I think how useless and ignorant I am in my own home."

"You have got two hands, why don't you go to work, and make yourself useful then?" Mrs. Pennock said sharply.

"Because, Aunt Esther, mamma is always changing servants, and our kitchen is always in a state of chaos out of which order never comes. There is no chance there for me to learn how to do anything well; but if I could learn somewhere else, then, when I am at home I really might be of some use, and add a good deal to to the comfort of the family."

Mrs. Pennock looked interested. "Your mother does make hard work of housekeeping," she said, "and you are right in thinking you might be a great help to her. But how can I help you in this matter, Janet; what is the favor you want me to grant you?"

"You can help me a great deal, if you only will, dear Aunt Esther," Janet said coaxingly, and the favor I want to ask is one you can easily grant. I want you to let me spend this

winter with you while papa and mamma are South."

"Is that all?" Mrs. Pennock said. "Why, of course, Janet, as long as you can be happy here, I am happy to have you stay."

"No, that is not quite all I want," Janet said slowly, "I want my stay here to benefit all my after life, Aunt Esther."

"Humph," Mrs. Pennock responded, "the benefit you receive, Janet, will depend upon yourself, I imagine."

"No, Aunt Esther, it will depend upon the place you give me in your family."

"Well, come to the point, and tell me frankly what place you want?" Mrs. Pennock said in a voice a little suspicious as well as irritated.

Janet laid her hand on Mrs. Pennock's arm and looked pleadingly into her face. "Aunt Esther," she said meekly, "I want you to give me Honor's place, and treat me just as you do her."

"Give you Honor's place," Mrs. Pennock exclaimed, "and, pray, what do you wish me to do with Honor?"

"Nothing that will not be for her best good," Janet said in a tone of well-feigned sincerity. "Now please don't speak for a minute," she coaxed, as she saw that Mrs. Pennock was about to give her a sharp answer. "Please let me tell

you all my plan, and then, if you disapprove, why, I will try to bear my disappointment."

"Very well, tell me your brilliant plan, then," Mrs. Pennock said, in a tone that denoted more indignation than interest.

"Aunt Esther," Janet began humbly, "please do not think that I have not considered Honor's interests in this matter as well as my own." Mrs. Pennock frowned, but Janet went bravely on. "Since Honor came to you, Aunt Esther, she has learned how to do all kinds of useful work, but she is very bright and beautiful"-it was hard for Janet to make this admission, but she could do it in order to attain her object-"and she ought to be fitting herself to be something more than an upper servant all her life."

"Pshaw," Mrs. Pennock ejaculated, but Janet saw that her arguments were producing the effect she desired, and with new courage she continued. "Now, Aunt Esther, this is my plan. I need just the training and the experience in your house that have been such a benefit to Honor; but Honor, now, is ready for something different and higher. Give me her place, and-don't speak just yet," Janet begged, for Mrs. Pennock moved impatiently-"and let Honor go to Professor Montgomery's to read English literature with him this winter."

"What?" Mrs. Pennock exclaimed, "what put that plan into your head, Janet?"

"Nothing more foolish than Mrs. Montgomery's own letter, that you received yesterday," Janet answered. "Don't you remember, Aunt Esther, Mrs. Montgomery said the professor was writing a book—The Bible in the Literature of the 19th Century, wasn't it?—but his eyes were troubling him, and he wanted very much to find some young person to read to him—"

"He didn't want Honor, though," Mrs. Pennock interrupted quickly.

"He would want her, if you would give her to him," Janet insisted. "Now, Aunt Esther," she urged, "can't you see what a great thing it would be for Honor to pursue a course of reading with Professor Montgomery? She has literary tastes—I know that from the compositions she used to write at school—and a few months with Professor Montgomery will do more to cultivate and enrich her mind, than years of such dull plodding over her old school books as I believe she is doing now."

Mrs. Pennock looked thoughtful. "There is some sense in what you say, Janet," she admitted, "but then"—and her face brightened—"I have never intended to make a servant of Honor, and all the time she wants for study and reading this winter I will give her."

"But you cannot give her such a teacher as Professor Montgomery would be," Janet said shrewdly; "and then,—don't you see, Aunt Esther—with Honor here I cannot take her place and learn as I want to."

There was a little flash in Mrs. Pennock's eyes as she turned them full on Janet. "If you do take Honor's place you will have to fill it," she said with decision. "Your duties will have to be thoroughly performed. There will no shamming allowed because you are my niece."

Janet had already considered the probability that Mrs. Pennock would be exacting. It was not a pleasant situation that she was manœuvering for, but she believed she could soon find a way out of it; her first desire however was to secure it, and now she clapped her hands, and said promptly, "That is just what I wish, Aunt Esther. Well, is it all settled then?"

"No, it is not all settled: you are not the only one to be considered in this business," Mrs. Pennock said in a peremptory and yet sad tone. "Say nothing to any one about this until I give you leave," she said with a little gesture of dismissal.

Janet stooped and kissed her aunt's cheeks. "You are a dear, kind auntie," she said, "and I believe you will make a good and useful

woman of me yet, and if you do, I shall bless you always."

"Perhaps," Mrs. Pennock said; but though her voice softened a little, her eyes followed Janet doubtfully as she left the room.

"Is she sincere?" she asked herself; "her arguments seem good, but what are her true motives?"

Mrs. Pennock considered that question a few minutes, and then went in search of her nephew. "Vaughn," she said, "would you think it desirable for a young person to study literature under Professor Montgomery?"

"I should think the young person very fortunate who was able to do so," Mr. Royalston answered.

"Well, you heard me read Mrs. Montgomery's letter yesterday, you know the professor wants a reader?"

"I believe I did hear something to that effect," Mr. Royalston answered indifferently.

"Well, what do you think of my sending Honor to him?"

"Honor?" Mr. Royalston threw down his book; walked to the fire-place, and gave the wood smouldering there a savage poke. "Honor?" he repeated.

"Yes. Janet has been talking to me. She is suddenly fired with an ambition to be of some

use in her home. She wants me to give her Honor's place for this winter, and let Honor go to the professor. Now, what do you think of the plan?" and Mrs. Pennock looked anxiously at her nephew.

"I distrust Janet," he said in a stern voice.

Mrs. Pennock sighed. "I am afraid she has some hidden motive," she acknowledged, "but still her arguments are worthy of consideration. She would be a great help to her mother if she were a well-trained housekeeper, and if she stays with me"- and Mrs. Pennock smiled a little grimly-"I can promise her that she will be trained. But "-and Mrs. Pennock's voice grew very serious-"I am most anxious now to consider Honor's interest, Vaughn. The girl is very capable, and a few years will make a beautiful woman of her. She ought to be fitted to fill any position. If she stays with me this winter I will give her all the time she ought to have for reading and study, but she will have to work alone; will it be better for her to read under Professor Montgomery? If she goes to him," Mrs. Pennock added slowly, "I shall request him to give her every possible benefit."

"I wish I was going to be here this winter," Mr. Royalston said soberly.

Mrs. Pennock straightened her spectacles and fastened her bright eyes on her nephew. "So

do I wish you were going to be here," she answered. "You know I do not half approve of your going off on that scientific expedition to Africa, but even if you were going to be here, I don't know how your presence could affect this question."

"I would direct Miss Honor's reading my-self," Mr. Royalston replied gravely.

"You?" Mrs. Pennock hesitated, frowned a little, and then smiled. "I think," she said shrewdly, "if it has come to a choice between you and Professor Montgomery; I had better send her to the professor."

Honor's astonishment when Janet's plan was first explained to her was indescribable. At first she could not believe that the change proposed was seriously intended, and it was not until after a long and tearful talk with Mrs. Pennock that she finally consented to go to the professor. But though she knew that Mrs. Pennock was unselfishly anxious to consider her interests, she could not believe that the change would do her good or prove a happy one.

"Am I to congratulate you, Miss Honor?" Mr. Royalston asked, when he met her in the parlor, on the day when it was finally decided that she was to spend the winter with Professor Montgomery.

"For what?" she asked in a discontented voice. "For my resemblance to Noah's dove?"

Mr. Royalston smiled. "I believe you do resemble that famous bird in a way that you are not thinking of," he said. "The dove returned to the ark when she found no resting-place, you remember, and always while my aunt lives this home will be open to you. You will always find a resting-place here, if no where else."

"So Mrs. Pennock says," Honor answered sadly. "But one can never go back and live the same life twice over; I don't believe I shall ever come back here to stay again, and if I do everything will be changed."

"In what way, if you please?" Mr. Royalston asked playfully.

Honor looked at him reproachfully. 66 T don't know," she said in a vexed tone, "of course, I cannot read the future."

"Oh, I beg your pardon," Mr. Royalston answered. "Your words sounded so prophetic that I really was not sure but you knew what changes are to occur here."

"Don't laugh at me," Honor said with a child's impulsiveness. "I have been very happy here, and you don't know how hard it seems now to be sent away when I don't want to go."

Mr. Royalston made a quick movement and

then stood still and folded his arms. "Miss Honor," he said gently, "who do you think is really ordering your life?"

Honor's lips trembled. "I suppose God is," she said slowly, "but—sometimes, it is very hard to believe so."

"What makes the belief so hard?" Mr. Royalston asked.

"Everything," Honor answered with unusual vehemence. "When everything goes contrary to our wishes, isn't it hard to believe that God is behind all that happens, and is ordering all things for our best good."

Mr. Royalston watched her troubled face for a moment, and then he said, "Yes, it is often hard to believe so, Miss Honor, but would you know why? Listen," and in a low voice, that seemed touched with some deep feeling, Mr. Royalston repeated:

"'Faith fails;
Its foes alarm,
And persecution's threats disarm.
False friend can scarcely wish it a good day,
Before it taketh fright and flees away.
When God doth guard what foe prevails?
Why then the fear?
Faith fails.'"

"Is not that true?" he asked gravely. "Is not want of faith the great cause of your distress now?"

She would not answer his question. "It is natural to feel sad, when we have to leave those who have been kind to us, and go among strangers," she said.

"Yes," he kindly assented," but the child who holds the Father's hand never fears to go where the Father leads."

"Sometimes we are not sure of the leading," Honor answered. "Mr. Royalston"—and she looked up with a child's confidence into his face—"I will tell you how I feel. I do not believe Janet is my friend. I believe she has been working to get me sent away from here. I believe her reasons for wanting me to leave here are mean ones; and so, since she has succeeded in her designs, how can I believe that my leaving is one of God's leadings?"

Mr. Royalston could not deny that Honor's suspicions were true, but he would not touch on that subject.

"Miss Honor," he said with grave gentleness, "whatever causes have led to your leaving here, they are but second causes. God is behind them all. If you are his child he has a plan for your life, and that plan, if you trust yourself to him, will be made to work for your best happiness here and hereafter. You must believe this," he kindly insisted. "You must never doubt your heavenly Father's guidance;

and then when a cloud darkens the blue of your sky you will always be able to see the rainbow in it."

Honor stood still and looked sorrowfully out of the window; and after a moment's silence Mr. Royalston resumed, "There is one thing in this arrangement that makes me very glad for you. You are not going to entire strangers. You will find Professor Montgomery and his wife as lovely in their home as they seemed here; they will give you a friend's warm welcome."

"They may," Honor said a little ungraciously, "but I don't know—I believe the professor thinks his family better than mine; you remember he wouldn't give me a place in his tree."

"Miss Honor," and Mr. Royalston's voice sounded almost stern, "do you know that you make me think of a naughty child? I feel strongly inclined to scold you a little, for you seem to me disposed to-day to manufacture clouds, and then to look at them through a magnifying glass. You know," he continued gravely, "that I am myself going away on an African expedition. It may be long before I have a chance to preach to you again; now let me once more take the privilege of a friend—more anxious for your happiness than you can

understand—and beg you to do two things conquer the pride that so often leads you astray-oftener than you believe, pride is at the bottom of all your wounded feelings. Crush that pride; it has no place in heaven; give it none in your heart. And one thing more: never suffer yourself to doubt your heavenly Father's love: cultivate faith as you would the seed of some choice flower; cherish it, and it will make your life beautiful. Will you do this?" -and Mr. Royalston held out his hand-"promise me, I want your promise."

With eyes so dim that she could not see his face Honor laid her hand in his. "I will try

to do so," she softly promised.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE STUDY.

"God's leadings often crossed their inclinations,

The pillar went too fast or went too slow,

It stayed too long to suit their restless tempers;

Or when they wished to stay it bade them go.

And so they murmured, murmured very often,

Their sinful hearts rebelled against the light;

And had not God been strong and very patient,

They never would have found their way aright."

—Author of "The Old, Old Story."

changes that come so often in our lives, perhaps we would never truly appreciate our blessings, or know when we were happy. Honor's fifteen months with Mrs. Pennock had been peaceful months, undarkened by any real trials or sorrows; yet while they were passing Honor had known many rebellious and discontented hours. Now it seemed very strange to the poor girl, that just as she began to prize her privileges in Mrs. Pennock's house, and to profit by them, she should be so suddenly deprived of them, and obliged once more to go forth as a stranger among strangers.

She believed in Mrs. Pennock's sincerity when she told her that her own good was her only motive in consenting to the change; but Honor dolefully felt that she might have been allowed to decide what would be best for herself; and it was with a heavy heart and a gloomy face that she made her preparations for leaving Pennock Manor. Mr. Royalston's kind words helped her much—for sympathy is an invaluable help over hard places—but still her last day in Pennock Manor was a very sad one.

A telegram summoned Mr. Royalston to the city that morning, and his farewell was hurriedly, and—as it seemed to Honor—coldly spoken. Ethel had already gone home, and Janet's undisguised satisfaction, in the changes that her influence had brought about, not only wounded Honor, but made it very hard for her to part with her pleasantly.

Honor was to leave Pennock Manor very early in the morning, and her dread of the last long evening in the library with Janet and Mrs. Pennock, made her linger over her packing until she heard Janet come up-stairs to go to bed. Then she opened her door and stepped out into the hall.

"Good-bye," she said soberly, as Janet was passing her, "I don't suppose I will see you in the morning, Janet."

Janet stopped. "No," she said carelessly, "since you are going to start before daybreak it is not likely that I'll be up. Well, goodbye," she added as she just touched the tips of Honor's fingers, "I hope you will like your new place."

There was an intentional sting in Janet's last words that made Honor quiver with indignation. She did not attempt to answer her; she waited until she heard her lock her door, and then she went slowly down-stairs and into the library. Mrs. Pennock was still there; she had dropped her work, and was sitting with folded hands thoughtfully watching the dying fire. She looked up as Honor entered, and the smile with which she greeted her was touched with some feeling at once sad and sweet.

"I was just thinking of you, my dear," she said gently; "what have you been doing all this evening?"

"Packing," Honor said with a sigh.

"Then I am sure you are tired; sit down there in Vaughn's chair"—and Mrs. Pennock motioned to the easy chair Mr. Royalston usually occupied—"I want to talk to you for a few minutes."

Honor dropped into the luxurious chair; rested her weary head against the soft cushions, and looked moodily into the fire. Mrs. Pen-

nock watched her face for a moment, and then she said kindly: "Honor, I am very sorry to part with you, but the more I consider this arrangement the better satisfied I feel that it is in all respects a good one for you."

"Oh, don't," Honor almost sobbed, "don't talk of its being good for me to go away from here when it is almost breaking my heart. I have been happy here, Mrs. Pennock. I felt sheltered and safe, and now"—— Honor's voice choked. "Oh, you don't know"—she sobbed in a moment—"how hard it is to be driven out again among strangers."

"But you are not driven out; and you are not going among strangers," Mrs. Pennock said with kind decision. "Professor and Mrs. Montgomery remember you very pleasantly, and they will be very kind to you; but, Honor, I have only consented to part with you, because I want you to be not only a thorough housekeeper, but a cultured woman, with every talent you possess made the most of. I have done what I could to train your hands; now under Professor Montgomery's instruction your mind will be trained as it could not be here. And Honor," and Mrs. Pennock spoke very tenderly now, "this separation is only for a short time. When Janet leaves me in the spring you shall return. Pennock Manor will

always be your home, and if ever you are in any trouble you must come to me at once."

Honor's lips curved with a pitiful smile as she looked at Mrs. Pennock. "You are very kind, and you don't know how much I thank you for all you have done for me," she said sadly, "but I don't believe I ever shall come back here; and"—with a sudden burst of tears—"I don't believe I shall ever again be as happy as I have been here."

Mrs. Pennock's own eyes grew a little misty as she watched the sobbing girl, but her answer was quick and positive.

"Nonsense," she said cheerfully, "before you have been with the Montgomerys a week you will, I dare say, wonder how you could ever have been contented and happy here. There are a good many more sunny days than dark ones in most lives, Honor; and the changes that God orders for his children are much oftener happy than sad."

Honor shook her head doubtfully. "They don't seem to be so in my life," she said sorrowfully.

"Your life has but just begun," Mrs. Pennock said gently; "you do not know what beautiful and glad surprises God may be holding in reserve for you. But, my dear, I am not sure that our own happiness is the chief thing we

are to seek in this life. I know the young are apt to feel that life is a failure if it does not give them happiness, but a wise man once said, 'One can do without happiness and find blessedness,' and I, my child, through the experiences of many long years, have learned to believe, that the surest way to find happiness for ourselves is to seek to bestow it upon others."

Honor's only answer was a heavy sigh: pity for herself was the strongest feeling in her young and impulsive heart just then, and Mrs. Pennock understood her, and felt no desire to chide her.

"It is time you were in bed, Honor," Mrs. Pennock said when the silence between herself and Honor had been unbroken for some minutes. "You have a long journey before you to-morrow, and you must not sit up late to-night."

Slowly and unwillingly Honor arose from her chair. "Good-night," she said, but Mrs. Pennock extended her hand and drew her close to her. With a tenderness of manner, that Honor never forgot, she laid her hand on the girl's bright hair, and whispered fondly:

"May the Lord guide thee and guard thee: good-bye, my child."

The sky was still bright with stars the next morning when Norah knocked on Honor's door.

"Your breakfast is ready for you, Miss Honor, and the man is here for your trunk," she said.

It was well for Honor that she had no time for idle and useless regrets: by the time she was dressed, and had swallowed her cup of coffee, the carriage was at the door, and the coachman was calling impatiently that it would soon be time for the train. It was so early that Honor would not disturb Mrs. Pennock by going to her room, but just as she was seated in the carriage Norah brought her a small package. Mrs. Pennock had sent it with her love, the girl said; and through her lonely ride to the station Honor held it close, for it seemed to embody all the love there was for her in the world.

It was still dark when she took her seat in the car; but with sure and beautiful changes from shadow to light, the dawn broke, the sun rose, and the morning deepened into a radiant day. For a little while Honor gave herself up to sad and tearful memories; she reviewed all her life since her father's death, and then, with a morbid determination to be miserable, she began to anticipate the annoyances and trials awaiting her in her new home. She had just made up her mind that she was very unfortunate and very much to be pitied, when her eyes fell on the little package in her lap.

She knew that it was a book, and a little

curious to know what book Mrs. Pennock would give her as a farewell gift she untied the pink cord and unfolded the paper in which it was wrapped. Then once more her eyes filled with tears, for the little volume was a beautifully bound copy of "Thomas à Kempis; and on the fly leaf, Mrs. Pennock had written her name, and after it the tender assurance, "If thou bear thy cross cheerfully it will soon bear thee." For some time Honor studied those words and then she soberly turned the leaf. To her great surprise a familiar little white card was waiting for her there; and in Mrs. Pennock's hand writing she saw written:

Honor Montgomery's Duties for the Rest of Her Life.

1st. Be cheerful; never darken another's sky with your own clouds.

2nd. Be courageous; never waste your imagination in inventing bugbears.

3rd. Be helpful; remember God has given you two hands that with them you may bestow as well as receive blessings.

4th. Be thoughtful of others; remember the old beatitude, blessed are the happiness makers.

5th. Be faithful in the least things; remember the old sculptor who carved the back of his statue as carefully as the front, because the gods see everywhere.

6th. Be a Bible student and a follower of Christ; remember the old Jewish proverb, if you would be fragrant keep close to the seller of perfumes.

Honor read and re-read that little card. It caused her a sharp pang of pain as she thought that it was the last one she would ever receive from Mrs. Pennock, and she touched it tenderly with her lips as she thought of the kind feeling that had induced Mrs. Pennock to write it. Then she remembered that there was no time like the present for the performance of duty, and she resolutely cleared her face, and made a brave and not unsuccessful attempt to be cheerful.

Swiftly the day advanced, and the cars flew on. Late in the afternoon Honor exchanged the cars for a stage, and just at dusk her long journey ended.

The kind welcome she received from both Mrs. Montgomery and the professor made her ashamed of her ungracious forebodings; and when her bright little namesake dashed impulsively into her arms with the happy cry, "Miss Honor Montgomery, I is very glad you is come to live with us," Honor made a firm resolve that she would try to be glad too.

She looked forward with a good deal of dread to her first day in the professor's study; but nothing was said about her work until the next morning, as they left the breakfast table, the professor said, pleasantly: "Well, my little reader, do you feel rested and strong enough for work to-day?"

Honor could not resist the cheerful heartiness of the professor's voice, and she smiled in spite of her fears as she answered:

"Oh, yes, I am quite rested, but—" she added timidly—"I am afraid you will find me very ignorant."

Professor Montgomery smiled. "I do not expect to find you an Admirable Crichton," he said playfully, "but if you bring patience and application into my study I will pardon your ignorance. Come to me at nine o'clock, and we will begin our battle with the books."

Punctually at the hour appointed Honor found her way to the study. Professor Montgomery was already there. He was sitting at his writing table so surrounded with books that he looked as if he were barricaded with them. On her way to the table Honor stumbled over a set of huge encyclopedias, and when she stood before the professor, while he sat in his low chair, she could scarcely see his face for the ponderous dictionaries that were piled about him. At her approach he looked up, placed two or three of the large volumes on the floor, glanced at his watch, and then said in an approving tone:

"You are punctual to the minute, Miss

Honor. I am glad to see that you know the value of time; those who save the minutes will find some day that they have saved something more precious than gold. But sit down. Take that low chair by that window—you will be in a good light there—and now tell me, do you know what I am doing? and what you are to help me do?"

"Mrs. Pennock said you were writing a comprehensive work on English literature," Honor said as she took the chair the professor had chosen for her, and wondered, a little fearfully, if she would have to read from one of the large volumes before him.

The professor smiled. "Mrs. Pennock certainly gave a comprehensive name to my work," he said. "Its nature is not quite as universal as she represented. I have named my book 'The Bible in the Literature of the 19th Century,' and I am tracing the influence of the sacred Word through the writings of the poets, essayists, historians, and novelists, who, in this present century, have enriched our minds and language with the creations of their genius."

"And is it there?" Honor asked with quick interest. "I mean," she timidly explained, as the professor, interrupted in his thought, looked as if he did not understand her question, "I

mean can you find the Bible in the works of all the great authors?"

"Yes, I can find it in them," the professor said with assurance. "I find it in their morality, that like sweet water from a pure fountain flowed first from the Bible. I find it in their enthusiasm for humanity—an enthusiasm that was never known until the New Testament taught it—and I find it in those lofty ideals of character that all the best writers hold up for our admiration and emulation. The grand originals of all those ideals can be found in the Bible, but nowhere else."

"But," Honor said thoughtfully, "some of the most famous writers of this century have not been Christians, nor even believers; you cannot find the Bible in their works, can you?"

Honor's question aroused and interested the professor. His eyes flashed, and his voice was earnest and positive as he answered:

"Yes, I do find it in them, negatively if not always affirmatively. Some of those writers devoted their great mental powers to the one task of trying to destroy the world's faith in the Bible; and in doing that they have given us a wonderful proof of the strength of the Bible, for like a Gibraltar it has withstood all their attacks. They, have made, too, exhaustive studies of the life of Christ, only to own,

like Pilate, that they saw no fault in him; and from one of the Bible's bitterest opponents this tribute has been drawn—'Nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation for the rule of virtue, from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life.' There"— and the professor's hand fell impressively on the book before him—"is not that strong testimony to the influence of the Bible?"

Honor scarcely heard the professor's question. Suddenly a high ideal had been raised before her, and the grandest purpose a human being could have seemed revealed to her—"To endeavor so to live that Christ could approve our life—"She was still dwelling on these words when after a brief silence the professor spoke again.

- "Are you well acquainted with the Bible, Miss Honor?" he asked.
- "I have never read it through," Honor regretfully acknowledged.
- "No? Well, I hardly supposed you had. There are many gold hunters in these days who do not know where to look for the true gold—but take an old man's advice, my little girl, and from this day become a faithful and careful reader of the Bible. If you wish to become an adept in the English language, you

will find that in purity, beauty, and simplicity of diction, the Bible excels all other books, If you wish to understand the illustrations and imagery you will meet constantly in our best writers, then, like those writers, you must study the Bible. You will never deserve to be considered well-read, an ambition that most intelligent young people possess, until you know your Bible. And if in your daily life you desire, as a Christian, to exemplify the teachings and precepts of your heavenly Father, then you must follow the guide book he has given you; you must study the Bible."

With a face as sweet as it was humble, Honor listened to the professor.

"I never realized all that the Bible was befere," she said with a child's simple truthfulness. "I feel now that I have neglected it, but I never will again."

"I hope you will not," Professor Montgomery answered kindly. "I am an old man, and I have read many books, and from them all I have gleaned knowledge; but the truest wisdom, the most satisfactory knowledge, that I possess, I have gained from the Bible. But now"— and the professor walked to one of his cases and selected a book—"I think we must have a little reading. Have you ever read Carlyle's 'Heroes and Hero Worship'?"

"No," Honor frankly confessed.

"Then you will never have a better time than to-day. I want to make a few notes on that rugged old Scotchman, so, if you please, we will begin our winter's work with him."

That morning's reading proved very delightful to Honor, and when the little French clock struck twelve, and the professor said kindly, "School is dismissed," Honor closed her book with a happy smile.

"Are you tired?" the professor asked as he watched her.

"Tired?" Honor repeated. "Oh no, I feel like a traveller in a new world, I only want to go on."

Professor Montgomery's smile denoted his satisfaction. "My little girl," he said, "you and I will do good work together if we both live. But it must not be all work and no play. I shall not want you again until two o'clock—then we will try some old English poetry. Now find your little namesake, and go out for a walk in this bright sunshine."

CHAPTER XVII.

OLD RECORDS WANTED.

"The mystery of the untried days
I close my eyes from reading:
His will be done whose darkest ways
To light and life are leading."

-Whittier.

WELL?" Mrs. Montgomery said inquiringly, that evening, when she and the professor were reviewing the experiences of the day, "you are satisfied then?"

"More than satisfied," the professor replied.

"She has a bright, active mind, and she is thoughtful and quick of comprehension. She is unaffected, too, and as frank as a child in confessing her ignorance; but all her questions are intelligent, and she catches a suggestion, and—as Lowell would say—'snatches its essential grace of meaning out,' in a way that is both interesting and stimulating to watch."

Mrs. Montgomery looked both pleased and relieved. "You think then, that she really will be a help to you in your work?" she said.

"Yes, she will be a help to me—her young

mind will be something like a tonic to my old one—and I believe I can be a help to her. I do not intend to limit her reading to the books I want for my work. She is something like a jewel in the rough now, and I intend to spare no pains in polishing her. To do so will be only a pastime for me and it may prove a great benefit to her."

"Instead of 'may,' say 'will,'" Mrs. Montgomery answered; while a little shadow that sometimes rested on her face gave place to a contented smile.

It was, in truth, a great relief to Mrs. Montgomery to find her husband so thoroughly interested in Honor. He was a man who was always riding a hobby. His literary work, taken up so late in life, while it absorbed all his time, was never, as Mrs. Montgomery well knew, likely to amount to anything; and she feared the effect his intense application to it might have on both his health and mind. Now if he became interested in educating Honor, she believed, since he never devoted himself to two things at once, that his writing would soon cease to be of paramount interest to him; and that, in her opinion, was a consummation most earnestly to be desired. She was silent for a little while, but presently as she glanced at the professor and saw that his eyes were

resting on his family tree—that engraved and handsomely framed hung over the mantel opposite his chair, she said:

"I do wonder, my dear, if this young girl does not belong to your family? It seems strange to me that she should be named Honor, and I do think her face resembles the portrait of your cousin Honor. Now just go and look at that picture, and see if you don't detect the resemblance."

"Nonsense, my dear, all nonsense: a woman's imagination is always running away with her," the professor said wisely. But he left his chair as he spoke, lighted a wax candle that stood on the mantel, and walked to the portrait that hung opposite his writing table.

He studied the portrait for some minutes and then extinguished his candle, and resumed his seat.

"Well," Mrs. Montgomery asked, "don't you agree with me?"

The professor shook his head. "It is the great pleasure of my life to agree with you, my dear," he said, with his old-fashioned courtliness of manner, "but in this instance I find it impossible to do so. My cousin was a beautiful woman."

"Most people who have seen Honor would think that that fact only made the resemblance more marked," Mrs. Montgomery said, significantly.

The professor thrust his fingers through his hair and looked seriously annoyed. "My dear," he said in a minute, "what is the use of our considering impossibilities? My family tree is complete. It is just as improbable that there are any omissions in it, as that I would omit a letter in repeating the alphabet. I like Miss Honor. I shall do everything in my power to help her; but her family and mine are totally distinct; that is as sure as that my tree is perfect."

Mrs. Montgomery was a wise woman. She was never anxious for the last word, and now, as she saw her husband's annoyance, she quietly changed the subject. "Have you heard from Judge Ketcham since we were at Pennock Manor?" she asked.

"Why, yes," the professor answered. "I forgot to mention it, but I received a letter from him to-day."

"Did you?" Mrs. Montgomery asked with interest. "What does he say?"

"Nothing of much importance. He says he may go to California for a few weeks."

"Why," Mrs. Montgomery said in a surprised voice, "how can he go? I thought that will case was to be settled this winter."

"No; he says there are some unexpected complications, and everything will have to rest for a while. By the way, he asks in a post-script, if I have seen or heard anything more of Miss Montgomery?"

"He seems strangely interested in her," Mrs. Montgomery said, as she slowly rolled up her knitting.

"I would say interested, and omit strangely, my dear," the professor observed. "Bright girls with their lives all before them, are interesting to everyone. By the way," he continued—repeating his favorite phrase—"I think—don't you—that Miss Honor's influence over our little granddaughter will be a great benefit to the child?"

Mrs. Montgomery nodded. "I believe that young girl's presence in our home will prove a benefit to us all," she said gravely. And the belief she then expressed she never saw reason to change.

Very pleasantly the days of that winter went by. Honor was well, interested, and happy. Every day the professor's interest in her deepened, and kindly and carefully as if she had been his daughter he marked out a course of study for her, and guided her through it. Three hours of every day she spent in reading aloud to the professor, and that reading—embracing as it did the best works of the finest minds—was of inestimable advantage to the girl.

Mentally Honor improved rapidly that winter; nor did she lack aids to growth in other directions. Her first morning's conversation with the professor had made a deep impression on her mind; and "to endeavor so to live that Christ might approve her life," became more and more—as the days went by—the high ideal to which through many struggles and failures she constantly aspired. She had few temptations now in her outward life. Professor and Mrs. Montgomery had no family save their little orphaned granddaughter; and there was no one in her present home to vex and irritate her as Janet had done.

But our temptations come from our hearts as well as from our circumstances and associates, and for a long time Honor could not think of Janet without a thrill of bitter feeling that was —and she well knew it—near akin to hatred.

Perhaps the surest test of our love for others is our willingness to pray for them, and Honor was very reluctant to pray for Janet—she was conscious that she did not want the blessings she most desired for herself given also to Janet, and for a long time it seemed to her that she never knelt down to pray without some unwelcome thought of her old schoolmate intruding

into her mind. For many weeks she tried to quiet her conscience by repeating hurriedly in her prayers, "Dear Lord, make me willing to pray for Janet." But that petition—that was never more than half sincere—brought her no comfort. At last there came a night of agony that Honor never forgot.

The day preceding that night a letter from Mrs. Pennock, in which she mentioned that Janet seemed interested in her tasks and performed them well, had given Honor a curious pang of disappointment and unhappiness. She had not dared to acknowledge it even to herself before; but now she knew that she had hoped that Janet would soon tire of her self-imposed duties, and disappoint and displease her aunt.

With her mind full of unkind thoughts of Janet, Honor went to bed and fell asleep. Suddenly it seemed to her that she was dead. How the great change had come to her she could not tell; but alone, with all the helps and hindrances of her earthly life removed, she found herself standing before the golden gate of the celestial city, and with hope's glad impatience she knocked for admission. Long she waited, but the golden gate remained unopened, and slowly but surely she began to understand that it would never open to any call from her.

"Why, oh why, am I shut out?" she cried in anguish: and a sweet, sad voice seemed to answer, "No heart that hates its brother man ever can enter here."

With a cry of terror Honor awoke. The relief, the wondrous comfort it was to find herself still alive, no words can describe. Out from her soft nest of blankets she crept, and kneeling by her bedside in brokenness of heart she prayed:

"My Father in heaven do not let me die until I have learned to love Janet; let me live until my heart is so full of love that there is no room in it for hate."

It was one of the trial hours in life that come to all God's children, when standing face to face with their own souls they see themselves in all their sad unworthiness. Long Honor knelt that night praying for a love she could not make herself feel. But at last, when all her struggles seemed hopeless, and too weary and spent for words she could only draw long, sobbing breaths, help came. It seemed to come with the sudden memory and the childlike acceptance of the promise, "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

As like some sweet low strain those solemn words floated through Honor's mind, her sobs

and struggles ceased. A great peace suddenly filled her heart; prayer was no longer an effort, and her words were but the eager expression of a loving desire, as she murmured:

"Dear Lord, bless Janet, make her a comfort to Mrs. Pennock, and a blessing to all her friends. Make her a Christian, and help her in all things to adorn her profession. Bless her, our Father, and help us both to be good and loving children of thine, for Jesus' sake."

Honor's first leisure the next day was spent in writing to Janet. It was but a little note but every word was sincere.

DEAR JANET—She wrote:—I have a confession to make to you. I have not loved you and I have not wished for your happiness and success this winter with Mrs. Pennock. I have not believed that you were my friend, and I have not been yours. But now, dear Janet—for I can truly call you dear now—all is changed. God has answered my prayers:—and Janet let me beg you never to doubt the power of prayer, for if it can take hatred out of my heart it can do anything.—I know that I am your friend now; I know that I wish you good: so much good, Janet, that I want you to become a Christian. Won't you study the New Testement, Janet? won't you accept Christ as your teacher and your Saviour, and give yourself to him to be saved and trained for heaven?

Please forgive and forget all that made you dislike me in the past, and try to love me a little now, because we are both God's children, and his children must love one another. Good-bye, Janet; through the rest of our life on earth, and through a long eternity in heaven, I pray that we may be friends,

Yours with sincere love,
Honor Thorn Montgomery.

For several weeks Honor watched for an answer to her letter, and when one day an envelope addressed in Janet's hand writing was brought to her, she received it with none but glad anticipations. She had judged Janet by her own changed feelings; she had not thought it possible that she could remain cold and unforgiving; and there was a bright and glad light in her eyes when she began to read. But the light and gladness soon faded, and Honor's face grew sad and even pale as she read:

"Your letter was received, sometime ago, Miss Montgomery, and I found your declaration of love extremely interesting; but as I was not prepared to respond to it, I thought silence would be my best answer. I write now at aunt Esther's request. She has been troubled with rheumatism lately and her right arm is disabled so that she cannot write herself.

The doctor advises a change for her, and she has decided to close Pennock Manor for a year, at least, and spend the time with my mother. Probably this coming summer we will go to Europe.

"Aunt Esther wishes me to say that you must no longer indulge any hopes of ever returning to her, and she trusts you will remain with your present employers and try to deserve their confidence."

"I know Mrs. Pennock never sent me that message—" Honor exclaimed indignantly, and for a few moments she let the letter rest in her lap, while she struggled for courage to finish it. Presently, with a great effort she took up the little "white-winged messenger," that had brought her so much pain, and forced herself to go on reading it.

"We heard from Mr. Royalston last night," Janet continued. "His letter was written from Cairo: he expressed the hope that Professor Montgomery would be able to make you useful, and would find you an intelligent assistant.—"

Honor's hand trembled for a moment and she shivered as if she had suddenly grown cold, but she read steadily on.

Fortunately the bitter letter was not much longer—

"I believe I have now complied with Aunt Esther's wishes, and said all she directed me to say about her plans," Janet wrote in conclusion. "For myself, I have only to say, that your offered friendship is an honor I have no desire either to accept or to reciprocate. With indifference I have written to you, and with indifference I sign my name.

JANET HOWARD."

It was a good proof of Honor's changed feelings that that cutting letter aroused no resentment in her heart. Slowly she folded and laid

it away, and with it she laid away the pleasant hope of ever returning to Pennock Manor. How long Professor Montgomery would want her services she could not tell; God held the key to all her unknown future, and in the strength that glad faith gave her, she went on cheerfully with her pleasant work, and grew each day more invaluable to the professor.

One day late in March Judge Ketcham suddenly appeared in the professor's study. With just a hasty word of greeting to Professor Montgomery he turned to Honor.

"Miss Montgomery," he said, "I have just been to Pennock Manor. I went there expressly to see you, but as I found my bird had flown I could only follow after and try to capture it."

"I don't understand," Honor said in much embarrassment.

"No, I suppose not. There is a great deal to explain I fear before you will fully understand me. But, Miss Montgomery, I am very anxious now to find those old records, you remember we spoke of that day at Pennock Manor."

"What old records?" Professor Montgomery asked abruptly.

"Oh, some that Miss Montgomery thought she might possibly have in her possession," the judge answered impatiently. "You remember"—and he turned again to Honor—"that I advised you to secure them as soon as possible. Have you done so?"

"No," Honor said, "I did not suppose they were of any value, and—if there really are any—they are still stored with other things in Broadfields."

"Then the sooner they are separated from those other things the better it will be for us all," the judge said with decision.

"But I don't understand," Honor said again. Judge Ketcham frowned and then smiled. "My dear Miss Montgomery," he said, "it is neither necessary nor desirable, just at present, that you should understand what I want of those old records. All I wish you to do is to produce them, if they are—as I devoutly hope—in existence; and in the meantime you must try to believe that in all I do, or ask you to do, I am anxious only to promote your interests."

Honor still looked puzzled, but the professor's face was a study.

"Really, Judge Ketcham," he said sharply, "this proceeding of yours is most extraordinary. I consider myself, in a certain sense, Miss Montgomery's guardian, and now I must request you to explain to me—if not to her—what you mean."

"All in good time, Professor," Judge Ketcham said cheerfully. "When I have a little more

leisure I will give you all the explanations you desire; but now"— and the judge looked at his watch—"it is necessary for me to act; and if Miss Montgomery will hurry I think we can catch the next train for New York, and by tomorrow we can be in Broadfields and secure those records."

"Catch the next train," exclaimed Mrs. Montgomery. "Judge Ketcham, what do you mean?"

"To act and not to talk, my dear madam," the judge answered promptly. "It is necessary for this young lady to go to Broadfields and examine her possessions there; for if those records are in existence I suppose they are there, and if they are in existence I must have them. Now, Mrs. Montgomery, will you trust Miss Honor to me? I will promise to return her to you in safety."

"Yes," Mrs. Montgomery said in a sober voice, "I will trust her to you; but before I do so I would like to understand you."

Judge Ketcham looked impatient. "While we are talking the time is flying," he said. "Miss Honor, please go and prepare for your journey, and in your absence I will try to convince your good friends here that there is, at least, some method in my madness."

With a good deal of reluctance Honor obeyed

the judge. When she returned to the study she noticed, with much surprise, that the professor's precious family tree lay on the table, and that he and Mrs. Montgomery were looking at it with very serious faces, while Judge Ketcham was talking earnestly.

"Here is where it ought to be, you see," the judge was saying as Honor entered the room, and as he spoke he placed his pencil on a certain spot in the tree. "Ah," he exclaimed in a lighter tone, as he glanced up and saw Honor, "Miss Montgomery, you are almost equal to Puck—wasn't it he who could put a girdle round-about the earth in forty minutes? You have been most expeditious, and now, if you are ready, I am, and the carriage is at the door."

"But your lunch?" Mrs. Montgomery said anxiously.

"Lunch?" the judge repeated. "My dear Mrs. Montgomery, eating is of secondary importance just now; but there will be plenty of 'pies an' cake' on the cars," he added laughingly, "and I promise you I will not let Miss Honor starve. "Come," he said hurriedly to Honor; but Professor Montgomery detained her.

"My dear Miss Honor," he said solemnly, "I want you to believe that while I value my tree I value truth and justice more. Now go

with the Judge, my child, and may your search for those old records prove successful."

Years afterward when Honor tried to recall the events of that strange journey all seemed as vague and indistinct as the pictures seen in dreams. There were confused recollections of the rush and whir of the cars through a long dark night, but nothing seemed real to her, either in the retrospect or at the time, until just at noon the next day she stood on the platform of the familiar Broadfields station, and saw on every side the well-remembered scenes in which her childhood and early girlhood had been passed.

Judge Ketcham had cared kindly for her comfort through her long journey; but he had given her no explanations, and had in fact rather avoided conversing with her; but as soon as they reached Broadfields he was as active and energetic as he had been in the professor's study.

"Now, Miss Honor," he said briskly, "if you know where your things are stored it will be best for us to go immediately there. I suppose you know the way;" and he looked doubtfully at Honor, who stood looking about her with dreaming and bewildered eyes.

His words recalled Honor to the present and its strange errand. The few things that

had been saved for her, from the wreck of her father's possessions, had been stored in the roomy garret of a kind neighbor's house, and to that neighbor's she at once led the judge.

There were many exclamations of astonishment when Honor appeared before her old friends, and there was much curiosity manifested as to her errand; but Judge Ketcham allowed her to waste no time in hearing and answering questions.

"We must find those papers first," he reminded her, "and, by the way," he asked, practically; "are your things locked or nailed up?"

"They are nailed up in boxes," Honor answered.

"Then we will need a hammer," the judge said quickly, and borrowing one from the owner of the house he followed Honor to the garret. Several boxes marked with her name were piled in one corner.

"Now, Miss Honor, which one shall I open?" the judge asked promptly.

Honor hesitated. Miss Clark had packed the boxes and Honor knew little more than the judge himself about their contents. She could give no directions, and saying wisely: "We have no time to waste in guessing riddles," the judge knocked up the cover of the first box.

It was filled with old china. Down went

that cover, and off went another. The second box was packed with bedding.

"If you only wanted to go to housekeeping, Miss Honor, there might be some satisfaction in opening all these boxes," the judge said in a vexed voice as he struck his hammer on the third box. That proved to contain books.

"Ah, this looks as if, like Columbus, we were nearing land," the judge exclaimed, as Honor drew out her father's green baize covered family Bible. "Is there nothing more there?" he asked in a disappointed voice, as after a few minutes spent in examining the books Honor began to replace them.

"Nothing that we want," Honor exclaimed.
"Somewhere there is a brown linen wallet full of papers. I don't know what they are, but if there really are any such records as you want, I think they must be in that wallet."

"Of course," the judge said as he turned to find the fourth box. It was also the smallest and the last. Its contents were very miscellaneous, consisting mainly of little things that Miss Clark must have saved more for the sake of old associations, than for any real value that they possessed. One useless little article after another Honor drew out while the judge looked grimly on, but at last she found the linen wallet.

"Ah, now I hope we have them," the judge said in a satisfied voice. "Open the wallet, Miss Honor, and let us see what's in it."

With nervous and trembling fingers Honor untied the tapes that fastened the wallet. Several old, time-yellowed papers were preserved in it, but as the judge examined them his face darkened.

There was an old will, but it bore the name of her mother's father; there were several old deeds, but they also belonged to her mother's family. There was not a paper that referred to her father or her father's family.

Slowly the judge looked them over, and then with a grave face he gave them back to Honor.

"They are not what I want," he said soberly.

"Have you nothing else?"

"Nothing but this," Honor answered, as she took up the old Bible.

"What is that?" the judge asked sharply. "Ah, I see," he said—answering his own question before Honor could speak—"a family Bible. Why, this may tell the whole story. Let me look at it."

With quick and impatient hands the judge took the book from Honor, and turned eagerly to the family register. Quickly he read it and once more the shadow deepened on his face. The Bible had belonged to Honor's mother's family. There was but one brief record in it that concerned her father, and that was the date of his marriage to her mother.

"'Rufus Thorn Montgomery married to Elizabeth Winslow, June 15th 185-,'" the judge read gravely. "Well," he said as he closed the book, "that doesn't tell much, and yet Rufus and Thorn are old family names. Is there anything more, Miss Honor, that may serve to illuminate this dark subject?"

No, there was nothing more, and Honor was tired and nervous; opening her boxes had been a painful task, and her utter ignorance of the judge's motives only added to her excitement. Now as she understood from his disappointed manner that their search had failed, she looked up into his face with trembling lips and teardimmed eyes:

"Won't you tell me one thing," she pleaded,
"is there anything very dreadful connected
with those missing papers?"

The judge smiled kindly as he saw her distress. "No," he said in a voice that was more comforting than his words, "there is nothing more dreadful than this—that I must telegraph and postpone some important business that ought to be settled to-morrow. By the way," the judge asked in an indifferent tone as he nailed down the last cover, "do you know any-

thing of your father's history, Miss Honor? did he ever tell you any stories of his childhood?"

"No, I think not," Honor said sadly.

The judge gave the box he was nailing up an unnecessary and energetic knock. "There, that is done," he said in a satisfied voice. "I suppose, Miss Honor," he said a few minutes later, as they were leaving the garret, "that there are old men in Broadfields who knew your father, aren't there?"

"Everybody knew and liked my father," Honor said in a tone that was at once proud and tender.

"So I supposed," the judge said cheerfully. "Well, Miss Honor, we have two long hours to while away before train time, and I think I will leave you in the care of your friends here, and take a short walk about the village. I am a born explorer, I believe; new places always fascinate me, and now, since we couldn't find those records I am going to try to stumble into a mine of gold—or of information," he added, in a tone too low for Honor to understand.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SECURING TESTIMONY.

"My duty for the day is plain—
To go where God shall call,
And patient hold the tangled skein
Until he unravels all."

-Anon.

SLOWLY, with his hands clasped behind him, his head thrown back, and his eyes keenly observant of every passing object, Judge Ketcham walked through the main street of the little village. It was a mild and sunny day such as often comes

"When March just ready to depart Begins to soften into April."

Presently in his walk, the judge came to an old house that with its weather-stained shingles, and low sloping roof looked as if it might have survived the Revolution. It stood near the road, and on a bench, just outside the door in the bright sunshine, an old man sat whittling. One sharp glance the judge gave him, and then he deliberately stopped before him.

"Good-morning," he said.

"Morning, sir," answered the old man, while his still bright eyes looked up shrewdly at the judge. "You be a stranger in these parts, I calc'late," he said slowly.

"Yes, this is my first visit to Broadfields," the judge replied. And then, skillfully divining where flattery would be most acceptable, he remarked: "It is a very pretty place."

"Well, yes, that is what everybody says; but to my mind it ain't half as pleasant as it used to be in the good old times that I can remember."

The judge nodded. "I've heard that said of a good many places," he observed. "But what made the old times better, Uncle?"

The old man gave a pleased laugh. "So you've found out my name," he said in a satisfied voice. "It's cur'ous how everybody knows me. I b'lieve I'm Uncle John to every man, woman and child in the country. And that's just as it should be, I think. God meant us all to be relations when he put us on this earth. Don't you b'lieve that?"

"I am glad you are willing that I should claim relation to you, Uncle," the judge answered smilingly, "but you haven't told me why the old times were better than these modern days?"

Uncle John had stopped whittling; but he

held his knife in one hand and worked its blade back and forth with the other, while he said slowly; "Well, for one reason, Mister, everybody knew everybody else in those days, and everybody was friendly. Now it's with the people just as it is with their houses. You never get in further than their parlors, an'there ain't half as much real help, and charity, and soc'bleness in the world as there used to be."

- "I dare say you are right, Uncle," the judge said, encouragingly. "Have you always lived in Broadfields?"
- "Yes, always, I was born and married here."
- "And I suppose you know all about the people who have been your neighbors here in Broadfields?"

Uncle John chuckled. "There ain't much about any of 'em that I don't know," he said proudly.

"There was a family named Montgomery living here a few years ago, wasn't there?"

"Montgomery! Well, now, Mister, it is cur'ous that you should speak of him. You see, I was always more interested in him than I was in any of my other neighbors just because there was something about him that I couldn't find out."

The judge looked like one who had at last found the lost end in a tangled skein. "I am always interested in stories about people," he said, "and I wish you would tell me what you did and did not know about Mr. Montgomery."

"You didn't know him, did you?" the old

man asked suspiciously.

"I never saw him."

"Well—won't you sit down, Mister?"—and Uncle John made room on his long bench for the judge—"He's dead an' gone now, an' his daughter's moved away, an' so it can't hurt nobody if I do tell you the story. You see when he was living he never could bear to have it spoken of, for family is thought a great deal of in these parts, and if Montgomery didn't have no family to boast of, he'd pride enough to have supplied a dozen."

Judge Ketchm's eyes flashed, but he did not speak; and in the slow, garrulous way, peculiar to the very old, Uncle John went on with his story.

"Let me see, it must be goin' on fifty years now, least ways it's between forty and fifty years ago, when I was was quite a young man, just gettin' to be middle-aged, that there was a great fire down in New York. You've been there often, I s'pose?" and Uncle John stop-

ped in his story and looked sharply at the judge.

"In New York? Yes, I live there."

"That's what I supposed. I gen'rally can tell a city man when I see him. Well, you see, that fire made a great stir among us quiet folks; an' one of my neighbors, Deacon Winslow, went down almos' a purpose to see the ruins. It always looked to me just as if Providence sent him, but the deacon wasn't conscious of being sent; he just went 'cause he felt cur'ous like to see what a fire could do when it did its worst. Well, he was walking about the ruins when a little boy came up an' spoke to him. He was a pretty little boy: the deacon was a pretty good judge-like most of us folks about here—of blood and family, and he always said, he knew as soon as he looked at him that that boy weren't no common child. The boy was crying, and he looked cold and hungry. He said his name was Rufus Montgomery and that was all he ever told about himself. He didn't beg of the deacon-little fellow though he was, he seemed too proud to do that-but he said he wanted work, and he asked the deacon, if he wouldn't give him something to do?

"He was such a little fellow that it seemed just about as sensible to expect him to work as to expect a pony to plough; but the deacon was

a good an' kind hearted man, and he said he couldn't leave the boy to starve or go to ruin in that wicked city, so he brought him home with him. Well, Mister, that boy made just about one of the best an' smartest men that was ever raised in Broadfields. He married the deacon's only child-you see it was just like a story in a book—he was justice of peace here for a while, an' he seemed to know how to do everything-'cept to save money. His wife died when they had only been married a few years, an' then he seemed just to live for his daughter. He was drefful sot on educating her; he spent most money enough on her to buy a good farm, an' yet when he died he didn't leave her a dollar. Strange now, wasn't it?" and for a moment, in his anxiety to hear the judge's answer, the old man forgot to snap his knife.

Judge Ketcham had listened with almost breathless interest, and now, instead of answering Uncle John, he asked quickly. "Is that all that ever was known about him? Did he never tell any more about himself?"

"No," Uncle John said with a sigh, "and that's why I was always so interested in him. I always felt just as if I was readin' the middle of a story, an' I did feel drefful cur'ous to know the beginnin' an' the end. But he's dead an' gone," the old man added plaintively, "an' I

don't suppose it matters much now what his story was."

"It matters to the living," Judge Ketcham said in a voice that made Uncle John turn his shrewd eyes on him in surprise. "You seem to care a good deal about that story, Mister," he said.

The judge laughed carelessly. "Yes," he answered, "mysteries always interest me. Do you suppose," he asked in a moment, "that Mr. Montgomery ever told any one about his early life?—what he could remember, you know."

Uncle John shook his gray head. "I never heard that he did: he was proud, and never said much about himself to any one. But—" and the sudden thought made the old man's voice quick and earnest—"I do suppose that if anybody knew more about him it was his house-keeper."

"And who was she?"

"As good a woman as ever lived. Melinda Clark."

Judge Ketcham rose hurriedly. "Where is she?" he asked.

Uncle John laughed. "You might just as well sit still, Mister," he said: "you won't find her to-day. She's moved away out West."

"Do you know to what place?"

"No; I did hear, but I've forgot."

Judge Ketcham looked as if he had been playing a game of chess and had been unexpectedly checkmated.

"Well, Uncle," he said, "it is time for me to go, but I am much obliged to you for your story, and I shall not forget it."

"Miss Honor," the judge said an hour later, while they were rushing toward the city as fast as the limited express could carry them, "where does your old housekeeper live?"

Honor had ceased to be surprised at any of Judge Ketcham's questions. "In Prairietown, Illinois," she said in a weary tone.

The judge took a little paper from his pocket. It was a map and time-table of one of the great western railroads. He studied it for a few moments and then said soberly; "Prairietown is not far from Chicago, and in these days of rapid travelling we can go there in thirty-six hours. Miss Honor, I think we had better take that journey."

Honor was fairly aroused now. "Go to Prairietown to see Miss Clark!" she exclaimed. "Why, Judge Ketcham?"

The judge smiled. "I cannot tell you all the whys, yet," he said cheerfully, "but I have already told you that I have some important business on hand that must be settled as soon

as possible. A few months ago I saw nothing to prevent its speedy settlement. Then something was suggested to me that complicated matters very much. There is now a certain question that I feel ought to be positively answered, and for some time I have been trying to answer it. I am pretty well convinced, in my own mind; but I cannot take a supposition into the court-room, and expect with it to overturn all the opinions and decisions of my brother lawyers. I must have positive proof. I fancied—it was perhaps a foolish fancy—that among your father's old papers I might find something that would be of assistance to me. Being disappointed there, I now think that I may possibly obtain some information from your old housekeeper, and therefore I propose now that we go to her."

Honor looked tired and despondent. "Why, can't you telegraph?" she asked.

"A telegram would only confuse her, and even a letter would bewilder her, and be hard for her to understand. Besides, time is very precious. That case must be settled; the opposing party will not consent to many more adjournments. I have only asked as a last concession—for a week's delay—and one hour with Miss Clark would probably accomplish more than a long correspondence. It is a clear

case, Miss Honor, we must go to Prairietown. I will telegraph to the professor, we will pick up my niece, Fanny Hudson, in the city, and take her with us to Chicago, and at eight o'clock this evening we will take the express train for Prairietown."

Honor felt as if she were entangled in a net from which she could not free herself. She could not oppose Judge Ketcham, and neither could she understand him. She was too confused and troubled to feel any pleasure even at the prospect of seeing Miss Clark, and through all her long journey she looked and moved like one in a dream. It was near sunset of the second day, that the light wagon, the judge had obtained at the Prairietown station, stopped before a comfortable looking farm-house.

"This is the widow Barlow's, sir," said their driver, and with a sigh of relief Honor stepped from the wagon on to the little horseblock.

Curious eyes had been watching from the window; and as Honor turned her face toward the house, the door opened, as if touched by a cyclone, and the next moment Miss Clark was by her side.

"Honor, why Honor," she exclaimed," what does this mean? I'm glad to see you. I'm amazin' glad to see you. Come right into the house. I am glad to see you," Miss Clark

repeated, when a few moments later Honor was seated in the chintz-cushioned rocker that had stood for years in the neat kitchen at Broadfields. "I am glad to see you"— and as she spoke she tenderly removed Honor's hat—"but"— and her voice grew very anxious—"what does it mean, Honor?"

"Nothing that need cause you any anxiety, Miss Clark," Judge Ketcham said, with the calmness of an old acquaintance. "I am Miss Honor's friend, and I have brought her to see you on very important business."

Miss Clark turned her troubled eyes from Honor, and gave the judge a keen glance. Something that she read in his face seemed to satisfy her, for her own face brightened, and in the brisk way that Honor so well remembered, she said: "I guess the most important business just now is to give her a cup of tea. And in a short time the cup of tea, with all the little accessories needed to make a tempting supper, was ready for the travelers.

When an hour or two later all traces of the supper had been removed, and Miss Clark sat in her rocker feasting her eyes on Honor, who was resting on the lounge, Judge Ketcham took out his note-book and said seriously:

"Miss Clark, if you are at leisure now, may I ask you a few questions?" "I never have been afraid to be questioned, and I never expect to be."

"These questions concern others more than they do you," Judge Ketcham explained; and then he asked, "During the long years that you lived with Miss Honor's father, did he ever tell you anything about his history?"

Miss Clark looked anxiously at Honor. "I ain't never been one to care much about the past," she said soberly. "I always believe in

looking forward to the future."

"But sometimes our future depends upon our knowledge of the past," the judge answered. "And now, Miss Clark, I wish you to understand that very important issues depend upon my obtaining from you all the information it is in your power to give me."

Miss Clark did not reply. With the impatient remark, "It is very warm," she arose and going to the cylinder coal stove, opened the door. Then she found her knitting work, and resuming her seat turned hastily to Honor.

"You ain't asked nothing about the boy you sent me," she said.

"I have not forgotten him though," Honor answered. "Do you like him?"

"Better an' better. At first he was a good deal like our new clock, it was pretty hard

work to get him regulated so that he'd run right, but now I'm pretty well satisfied with him."

During this little digression, that the judge suspected Miss Clark had made purposely, he looked very far from satisfied.

"Miss Clark," he said sternly, "I beg you to give me your attention for a little while. You remember I told you our business was important."

Miss Clark laid down her knitting, folded her arms, and looked at the judge.

"I am ready to hear whatever you have to say, sir," she said with much politeness; "but if—for reasons that I think good—I don't want to speak, I shall just remain silent."

"Very well," the judge said in a conciliatory voice. "Perhaps, after you have heard my story, you will want to speak. Now, in order to have you clearly understand what I want, and why I want it"— he proceeded slowly—"I must tell you that I am at present interested in the settlement of a large estate. A few years ago the owner of this estate, an old man, died. His wife and children had died before him, and he had no near heirs—that he knew of."

The judge emphasized the last words; paused and looked at Miss Clark a moment, and then

went gravely on: "In his will he gave his property to distant relatives; but in a codicil, made a few days before his death, he gave two peculiar orders. He ordered: first, that his property should remain undivided for five years; and in those years he desired his executor to make every effort to find any and all persons who might legally be entitled to a share in the estate, and he further ordered, that if a near and direct heir was found, the property, with the exception of a few unimportant legacies, should be given without restrictions to that heir. You understand the conditions?" the judge said, as he saw the sudden flash in Miss Clark's shrewd eyes.

She nodded. "Go on," she said imperatively. The judge suppressed a smile. "Unfortunately I cannot go much farther," he said. "Every effort"— he continued to explain—" has been made to comply with the requirements of that will. A family tree"— and he glanced at Honor who was listening with painful interest— "has been made and declared perfect. But no near heir has been found. A few months ago the five years expired, and then the distant relatives who expect to inherit the estate demanded a settlement. But just then my attention was attracted by a rather singular circumstance. It was only a trifle, perhaps, but

there is something in my nature that would have made me a good detective, I believe; and a detective you know never overlooks trifles. I was so impressed by that circumstance that being the executor of the will I took pains to have its settlement postponed; and lately I have been making every exertion to explain that circumstance."

"Well," Miss Clark asked earnestly, "can you explain it?"

"Satisfactorily to myself, but I am not yet able to give clear explanations to others. I believe"— and the judge looked sharply at Miss Clark— "that when my old friend wrote his codicil he feared or hoped—whichever you please—that somewhere in the world there was a person whose interests ought to be his first consideration."

"But you ain't found that person?" Miss Clark said quickly.

"Unfortunately no, but in Broadfields I met old Uncle John—you know him?"

"Yes," Miss Clark breathed rather than said. "Well, he told me a little story about Miss Honor's father, that seemed to me closely allied to the facts I am in search of. Now, Miss Clark—and once more the judge's keen glance gave emphasis to his words—"I believe you understand me. I am sure you see the import-

ance of giving me all the assistance in your power; and if you can, I wish you to give me the first chapter of Uncle John's story. That story began with a friendless boy; I want to know who that boy was, and where he came from?"

Miss Clark drew a long breath. "I wish I could tell you," she said, "but I only know what his wife told me in her last sickness."

"Tell me that, then," the judge ordered.

"It weren't much," Miss Clark said in a preparatory manner, "but you see Rufus was a puzzle to everybody. He was good, and universally respected; but he seemed to belong to no family; he had no relations, and he was no more confidential about himself than an oyster, and in some strange way every body felt sure that he had kept back more than he had ever told about himself.

"Well, one night, just before his wife died, when I was watching with her, we got to talking about him, and then she told me, in a proud kind of way, that he belonged to a better family than any in Broadfields. She said his mother died when he was a very little boy; he had no brothers and sisters, and his father used to drink, and never seemed to care much for him. The poor little fellow was dreadful lonely and unhappy, and when his father married again, and

his step-mother began to scold and punish him, he made up his mind—just like a foolish and ignorant boy you know—that he wouldn't stand it, and so he ran away from home. He got to New York just at the time of the great fire, that happened some time in the thirties, you know, sir."——

"Yes, in 1835," the judge said hurriedly.

"Well, Rufus had a few pennies—'bout enough to pay for a night's lodging—and he got took in by some poor people, and that very night the fire came and the house he was sleeping in was burned.

"He was so frightened then, that I b'lieve he would have gone home, if he hadn't been so terribly afraid of being punished. But as it was he didn't dare to go back, and he didn't know what to do; and one day when he saw a kind-looking man walking about the ruins he just went up to him, and asked him to help him.

"That was our good old Deacon Winslow, and I suppose there ain't no need of my going on, for Uncle John told you the rest."

"Yes," Judge Ketcham said, "and your story and his agree perfectly. But as he grew older did Rufus Montgomery never make any effort to communicate with his family?"

"No," Miss Clark answered, "and that is

just where I think he did wrong. I think he ought to have considered the interests of the living"— and she glanced at Honor—"but you see he was proud, and it is just the hardest thing in the world for a proud person to say I am sorry. Then you remember his own mother was dead, and, of course, his family soon believed that he was dead, too; and if he had gone back to them likely as not he wouldn't have been welcome. I dare say he often thought that he'd do something to prove his parentage, but when you drop a stitch at the beginning of your stocking it's hard work, when you are almost ready to "toe off" to go back and pick it up. And so Rufus lived and died and his family never knew nothing about him."

Long before Miss Clark's story was ended, Honor's face was hidden in the pillow of the lounge; but though Miss Clark laid her hand tenderly on her head, she made no attempt to comfort her.

The judge had conquered all her prejudices, and her one great desire now was to help him in his search; for with her keen mind she had comprehended much that he had left unsaid.

"You will be a valuable witness, Miss Clark," Judge Ketcham said approvingly. "But"—and once more his voice grew anxious—"did

Mr. Montgomery leave no records—no writings of any kind—by which his identity could be established?"

Miss Clark looked for a minute as if she were considering the pros and cons of some serious question, and then without speaking she arose and left the room. When she returned she held an envelope in her hand. The judge watched her in evident anxiety and impatience, but Miss Clark's movements were as deliberate as usual, and her voice was slow and even solemn as she said: "Honor, the night your father died, when he was first took sickbefore the doctor had come, and I'd called you -he said in his quiet way-just as if he was talking of taking a journey—that he did not think he should get well, and if he didn't he said I would find a letter in his desk-and he made me go and get it then—that he wanted me to keep until the time came for you to read it. Of course, Honor, I couldn't refuse him nothing then, so I promised to keep the letter and here it is."

"I want you to read the direction," Miss Clark said firmly, as she laid the letter in Honor's lap.

Honor's eyes were dim with tears; and too impatient to wait Judge Ketcham took up the letter and read aloud:

"' FOR MY DAUGHTER, HONOR THORN MONTGOMERY.
"' To be read by her after she is engaged and before she is married.""

"Yes," Miss Clark said, as the judge laid down the letter and looked at her, "that is what I wanted you to read. You see, Honor ain't engaged, and so I don't know as the time has come yet for her to read that letter. But then again, it ain't never, in my opinion, very safe to count on a girl's marrying. She is sure to die, and that is the only thing that is sure about her. And so if you think"— and Miss Clark looked with great deference at the judge—"that it would be right for Honor to disregard her father's orders and read that letter now, why, as you are a lawyer, I believe it will be safe for her to obey you."

"Yes, it will be safe," Judge Ketcham said with decision. "Miss Honor, read your letter."

CHAPTER XIX.

IN THE FAMILY TREE.

"More and more a Providence
Of love is understood,
Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good."

-Whittier.

TENDERLY, as if her letter were instinct with life, Honor took it up; with trembling hands she opened it, but as she read the first words her eyes filled. "Oh, I cannot read it," she sobbed.

Judge Ketcham hesitated; the letter seemed a sacred thing to him; but he was anxious to know its contents, and gently saying: "Let me look at it, Miss Honor," he took it from her, and in a low voice read:

My Precious Child:—Many times, in by-gone years, you have climbed upon my knee and pleaded for a story. To-night—prompted by an impulse I do not think it wise to resist—I am going to write you a story—the story of my childhood. I have never told you anything about my early life, but when you read this letter the time will have come for you to know its every fact.

I was born in the town of Richmond, in the State of New York, on the fourteenth of April, 1826.

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"Ah," the judge exclaimed in a satisfied tone, but his hearers remained silent and he read on.

My father's name was Rufus Thorn Montgomery. I do not remember my mother. She died when I was very young. If she had lived, my life would have been a brighter one; but God knows when it is best to take his children home, and I would not complain. My father's mother's name was Honor—it was in memory of her, my little girl, that I named you Honor, for she was always kind to me, and when she died all the sunshine went out of my young life.

I was an only child, and my father was a cold, stern man; he may have loved me, but he was that sad thing in a young child's life, an undemonstrative parent. Soon after my grandmother's death he married his second wife. I have lived long enough to lose all the prejudices I may once have cherished against step-mothers. I know that they are often true, unselfish, and loving, as the own mothers whose places—in God's providence—they are called to fill; but I have no bright recollections of my step-mother. She was harsh and severe; she did not love me, and soon my wilful heart rebelled against her stern authority, and one day, when I was left at home alone with the servants, I ran away.

I cannot now trace all the steps of my journey; I had rides with peddlers, I walked along railroad tracks, and I followed wandering showmen. At last I found my way upon a boat that was bound to New York, and one beautiful sunshiny morning—I can almost feel the warm sunshine of that morning now—I stood, a little, friendless waif, alone in one of the busy streets of the great city. I had a few pennies—given me by the captain when I left the boat—and I gave them to an old woman who kept a candy stand, and who allowed me to sleep on the floor in her miserable

home. That very night I was awakened by cries of fire. The wretched shelter I had found was destroyed, and I was lonelier than ever. Very regretfully I thought of my home; I know now that I ought to have returned there but I dreaded the punishment that I knew I deserved, and would probably receive, and so—too ignorant to make plans for my future—I lingered, with other homeless waifs, among the ruins left by the fire, and one day found courage to speak to a kind-looking man. From that hour I had a friend and a home, for the man was your mother's father, Deacon Winslow.

I cannot now state positively what motive made me shrink from telling my story. I think it must have been fear in the first place, but as I grew older pride exerted its baneful power. My little girl, if to-night I have any warning word to say to you, it is this—beware of pride. Behind all our finite weakness lies God's infinite power; for all our mistakes his love has pity and forgiveness; but the life that is governed by pride will surely suffer loss.

As soon as I was old enough to understand all the consequences of my rash conduct, my conscience began to urge me to confess the truth and return to my family; but I doubted their welcoming me, I even doubted their willingness to acknowledge me, and so the years have slipped by, and the duty I ought to have done long ago is still undone.

Lately I have had many serious thoughts, and I have about decided that this summer—for your sake—I will visit my old home, seek out my family, and reveal myself and introduce you to them. This is a dream; it may be fulfilled; but something—it may be one of those solemn, prophetic warnings God sometimes gives us—prompts me tonight to write this little record of my life. The hour of death is unknown; it may come suddenly and I would not leave you without some knowledge of your family. I hope to live until I have made ample provision for your support, but even if I should leave you poor, I would not

wish you then to go to a family as proud as I believe mine to be as a dependent. You will be happier if you live the independent life of a working woman, who depends only upon God.

But if the glad and solemn day ever comes—as I pray it may—that you stand ready to share another's life, and take another's name, then I want you should know that in your own name and your own family you are the equal of the best.

Good-bye, my child, it is a solemn thought that when you read this letter, I shall be beyond the sound of your voice or the reach of your hand. May God keep you, my darling. I leave you in his care. There, through all life's changes, you will be safe.

Your DEVOTED FATHER,
RUFUS THORN MONTGOMERY.

Broadfields, Midnight,
May 15th, 186-.

With careful and almost reverent hands, Judge Ketcham folded that letter and replaced it in its envelope. No one seemed ready to break the tender hush that had followed its reading, and for a few moments the little room was very quiet; but Miss Clark soon returned to the matter-of-fact realities of the present.

"Does that letter settle anything?" she asked.

"It settles a good deal," Judge Ketcham answered slowly, "but a few details are still wanting."

Throughout the evening Honor had been a quiet listener, but now she turned to the judge, took the letter from him, and said earnestly:

"Please tell me one thing. Does this letter prove that my father and Professor Montgomery belong to the same family?"

"Yes, it does prove that," the Judge said

with much assurance.

"I wish I understood how," Honor said in a troubled voice; "can't you explain it all to me now?"

"Yes," Judge Ketcham answered kindly, "I think it is safe now for me to give you a full explanation; until I was sure that I could establish your father's identity I did not want to raise any false hopes in your mind. But now—" the judge paused and took a pencil and a piece of paper from his pocket book—"I am sorry we haven't the professor's tree here," he said with a smile, "but if you will give me close attention, Miss Honor, I will try—without that 'perfect' tree—to make you understand your genealogy.

"The Montgomerys have a long ancestry," he continued to explain, "but we need not now try to trace them in foreign lands. It is enough, for our present purpose, for us to know that before the Revolutionary war a large tract of land, called the Montgomery Patent, was deeded by the Crown to one Rufus Montgomery. That Rufus Montgomery had two sons. One of those sons—we will call him Rufus the

second—had but one child, a son, who was also named Rufus. And that son in 1826—you are following me, Miss Honor?—became the father of your father, Rufus Thorn Montgomery."

Honor drew a short, quick breath. "I understand all that," she said, "but now what relation am I to Professor Montgomery?"

"Professor Montgomery," the judge replied, "descends from the second son of the first Rufus Montgomery. He was the youngest of a large family of brothers and sisters. He was first cousin to your grandfather, Rufus the third, and—since cousins are counted near or distant according to the generations—he was cousin once removed to your father, and cousin twice removed to yourself. Do you comprehend?" And the judge looked with smiling and yet doubtful eyes at Honor.

"She needn't be ashamed to own it, if she doesn't;" Miss Clark said impatiently," for it is just about as easy to see through a key-hole when the key is in it, as it is to trace such mixed relationships."

Honor smiled a little but she still looked troubled. "I do not understand how my father could have been so entirely forgotten when the professor made his tree," she said sadly.

"He was forgotten," the judge slowly an-

swered, "because he was believed to be dead: and on the Montgomery family monument, in the Richmond cemetery, his name is engraved with the date of his death, and that is the reason," he added smilingly, "why the professor did not think it possible to find a place for you in his family tree."

"But if he was said to be dead, what made you think he wasn't?" Miss Clark demanded now.

The judge smiled. "I told you I was something of a detective," he replied, "and when I first read that singular codicil I felt sure there was some serious reason for it. After a good deal of questioning and investigation, I learned, at last, that the body of the fourth Rufus—who was supposed to have been drowned—was never found. There everything rested, until I met Miss Honor. Her name aroused my suspicions; and now, at last, I have verified them." And with a little gesture, as if he were dropping a burden, the judge leaned back in his chair and folded his arms.

"Will it be possible, though, after all these years, to make people believe that my father did not die, and that I am his child?" Honor asked anxiously.

"They will be as blind as bats if they do not believe it," the judge replied.

"Tombstones are tombstones, though," Miss Clark said truthfully, "and it ain't very easy when one is set up to knock it flat."

"People with truth on their side can sometimes do hard things," the judge said calmly.

Miss Clark still looked a little dissatisfied. Suddenly her face cleared. "I've just thought of something," she exclaimed. "Honor, I was just going to tell you about that boy, Sam Black, when the judge put me on the witness-stand. You didn't know nothing about his history when you sent him here, did you?"

"No," Honor said, in some surprise at the

sudden change in the conversation.

"You remember he had a small bundle, don't you?"

"Yes," Honor answered, while, with a sudden flash of memory, she seemed once more to see that bundle under the dead woman's head.

"Well, Sam brought that bundle here, and one day I opened it. There weren't nothing of much consequence in it, but there was a little paper box full of old letters, that Sam couldn't have been more anxious about if they'd been deeds of lands and houses. He said they were to help him find his relations. Well I couldn't stop to read them then—for time's a drefful scarce thing in this house—but one rainy day this very month I did open one or two of them,

and I was surprised to see that there was a good deal about some folks named Montgomery in them. If I hadn't been so busy I should have written and told you about them, Honor, but perhaps it's just as well I didn't find no time to write, for now, instead of hearing about those letters, you can see them."

'All the while she was speaking Miss Clark stood by the door ready for flight; and now she hurriedly disappeared. She soon returned with a small box that she handed to Judge Ketcham.

"I think," she said gravely, "since you are a judge your judgment will be better than ours about these letters."

The examination of those letters proved a work of many minutes, and while reading them Judge Ketcham's face denoted surprise and interest. Presently he held up a piece of old time-yellowed paper, and said with a smile:

"That tombstone is overturned at last, Miss Clark."

"Knocked flat by an old letter," Miss Clark said doubtfully.

The judge smiled again. "Who do you think Sam is?" he asked.

"He ain't another lost Montgomery, is he?"
Miss Clark asked anxiously.

"No, not exactly, but he does belong to Miss

Honor's step-grandmother's family, and to that family," the judge now, for the first time announced, "I belong myself. I shall look after Sam's interests in future, Miss Clark, but first I must get Miss Honor's history straightened. Sam's grandmother and the second wife of the third Rufus Montgomery appear to have been cousins, and here in this letter"- and the judge opened the time-stained sheet-"is a fragment that looks as if it had been purposely preserved for us. It seems strange, but the strangest novels ever written are not so wonderful as real life. This letter was written by Mrs. Montgomery, it is dated November 25th, 1835. Your father arrived in New York at the time of the great fire, in December 1835, you remember, Miss Honor."

"Yes," Honor said nervously.

"Well, this letter confirms his story, and"—with a smile at Miss Clark—"lays flat the tombstone: listen," and in a triumphant voice the judge read:

"We have been sadly troubled and distressed about little Rufus' strange disappearance. No traces of him have been found, and as his little fishing rod is gone we feel very sure that he must have gone to the river fishing, and fallen in and been drowned. We think that his death cannot be doubted, and I have already ordered my mourning."

"There," the judge said, "I believe I have

at last secured evidence enough to convince the most skeptical. Now, Miss Clark, if you have anything to do here, before you put on your shawl and hat, you must do it immediately, for early to-morrow morning you must start with us for New York.

Miss Clark looked quite willing to start at once. "I feel just as if I was reading a story," she said, "and I know I shan't be satisfied until I see its end. Honor"—and Miss Clark's eyes danced with pleasure as she looked at the young girl—"I think, don't you, that Sam has made you a pretty good return for your kindness? But then"— she added wisely—"an opportunity to do a kindness is always an opportunity to make a good investment, but the pity of it is most folks ain't wise enough to know their opportunities until they've lost them."

Early the next morning, Honor and her companions took the train for New York. She had not grasped the full significance of the judge's story; much of it still seemed to her a tangled and confused history, but one fact, in all its beautiful meaning she had comprehended. She had relations, she really did belong somewhere. Only those who have never enjoyed it, know the full blessedness of a home; none but those who have known the sadness of lonely hours can fully appreciate the charms of society; and only

those who have hungered for love and friends know how precious and priceless love and friendship are.

Honor felt very impatient now to meet the professor and Mrs. Montgomery; but even her hungry heart was satisfied when she felt the tender clasp of Mrs. Montgomery's motherly arms, and heard the professor say, "My dear little cousin, I feel so proud of our relationship that I am glad to know that my family tree is imperfect."

The time for the final settlement of the Montgomery will case soon arrived. Rufus Montgomery's identity was clearly proven, and Honor's rights as his daughter were fully acknowledged. All that those rights were, Honor little dreamed; for until every thing was satisfactorily decided her kind friends wisely maintained a discreet silence. But one pleasant April morning Judge Ketcham entered the professor's study, where Honor was sitting alone, busy and happy with her books.

Judge Ketcham watched her for a moment, and then he said: "You have fairly settled down again to your studies, have you, Miss Honor?"

- "Yes," she said in a happy voice.
- "And you are quite content now, are you? You are satisfied with your new relations?"
 - "Satisfied?" Honor repeated. "Judge

Ketcham, you don't know how grateful and rich I feel whenever I think that I really have relations."

"Hu—m," the judge said slowly, "such riches are not always recognized as valuable; still I am not sure but you are right in your estimate of them. But, Miss Honor, now that your family claims are all settled, I am curious to know about your future. What do you propose to do?"

Honor looked at him in surprise. "Why just what I am doing now," she said. "I am going to live with my cousins, and go on reading

to the professor."

"He doesn't give you a very large salary," the judge said in a positive voice.

"It is quite large enough for all my wants,"

Honor said contentedly.

"Miss Honor," the judge said after a moment's silence, "I want to ask you a question. Suppose—we are at liberty to suppose even fairy stories you know—that you were suddenly to find yourself very rich, what would you do?"

Honor laughed. "I am afraid my mind is not great enough to entertain such a supposi-

tion," she said gayly.

"Try to entertain it, and tell me what you would do with your wealth," the judge gravely insisted.

"I don't know what I would do with it;" Honor said truthfully, "but I think, before I grew too fond of it, I would give the tenth of it back to the Lord."

The smile with which the judge had been watching her changed to a look of amazement, but he only said: "Go on. What would you do with the remaining nine-tenths?"

Honor smiled brightly; she was beginning to enjoy her imaginations. "I would like to be a kind of invisible Santa Claus," she said, "and go around the world dropping beautiful gifts into the hands of all the good people who have a great many wants and very little money to gratify them with."

The judge still looked a little dissatisfied. "What would you do for yourself?" he asked.

"For myself?" Honor grew thoughtful; an old conversation held long ago with Mrs. Pennock and Mr. Royalston returned to her. The light in her eyes softened as she answered: "I am not wise, nor strong, nor good, Judge Ketcham, and I might make many mistakes; I might want and indulge myself in many foolish things; but I think, to-day, that if I had wealth I would want to use it—for myself—in such ways as would make me all that God, if he gave me money, would want me to be."

"What do you mean?" the judge asked. "Does what God wants you to be depend upon money?"

"No," Honor said thoughtfully, "I can be good and true without money; but great opportunities and privileges involve great responsibilities, you know, and I would want to be equal to them."

The little shadow that had rested on Judge Ketcham's face yielded to a satisfied smile. "Miss Honor," he said gently, "you must prepare to meet the great responsibilities; for the great opportunities and privileges are surely yours."

Honor's face denoted her bewilderment, and the judge asked kindly: "Miss Honor, when I explained the conditions of that singular will to Miss Clark and yourself in Prairietown, whose will did you suppose it was?"

- "I didn't know—I never thought—I was interested in my father's story," Honor stammered.
- "Your father's story was closely connected with that will," the judge explained. "It was your grandfather's will. Your father, if living, would be his heir; and now as your father's only child the estate—and it is a great one—comes to you."

For a moment Honor looked at the judge as

if she did not understand him: then as she grasped his full meaning she covered her face with her hands.

"What shall I do with it?" she said.

Judge Ketcham did not smile. He had been the executor of many wills, and he had watched many heirs in the first moments of possession; but he had never before seen one who received wealth as a solemn trust and with the one absorbing desire to use it aright. He waited until Honor looked up and then he said:

"You cannot tell to-day all that you will do with your wealth, Miss Honor; but if you hold it as a gift entrusted to you by God, and look constantly to him to direct you in its use, it will prove a blessing to both yourself and others."

It was some time before Honor could fully realize the great change in her life, and when she learned that the beautiful old house, in which her grandfather had lived and died, was hers, and that it was thought advisable for the interests of the estate that she should go there and make a home, she was at first overwhelmed with her sense of duty and responsibility.

But Miss Clark, with her strong practical common sense came quickly to her help. "Honor," she said, "duty is duty and must be done; but if you just lean upon the Lord, and

follow as he leads you, you won't find it no harder to be a rich woman than it is to be a poor one. It isn't so much what we have as what we are, that's of consequence: and if you are God's true child you will not be afraid of any of your Father's gifts."

"But suppose I should grow so fond and proud of my money, as even to think myself better than others because I have it," Honor said fearfully.

Miss Clark looked at her soberly for a moment, as if to see whether the change Honor feared had already begun, and then in a solemn voice she said, "That time won't never come to you, Honor Montgomery, without you first drift away from God. Do you just write 'Holiness to the Lord,' on all your gold and silver; and then, though you will always be thankful for it, it won't never make you proud."

Miss Clark had spoken a good word in good season, and through all her after life Honor never forgot it. In the spirit of a child, who conscious of its own weakness leans hard upon the father's strength, she took up her opportunities and her privileges, and with them her responsibilities; and with Miss Clark to watch over and advise her she went to her old ancestral home.

CHAPTER XX.

AUTHOR AND CRITIC.

"Life is only bright when it proceedeth
Toward a truer, deeper life above;
Human love is sweetest when it leadeth
To a more divine and perfect love."

-Adelaide Proctor.

THE summer, with its glory of sunshine, its beauty of color, and its rapture of song and of life, was upon them before Honor was fairly settled in her new home. She had many new duties to perform now, and many new pleasures to enjoy. Many flattering attentions were shown her, and admiration, that once might have turned her head, followed her wherever she went. But Honor had learned the sweet lesson of humility in a good school; and now in her prosperity she manifested neither pride nor self-satisfaction, for she felt neither. As soon as possible she resumed her reading and studying. Professor Montgomery continued to choose her books and studies for her, and she had teachers for all the branches she could not pursue alone. She did not think of herself as more talented than other girls, or as gifted for any especial work; but with the sin-(354)

cere desire to do right she endeavored so to use her great opportunities that in the end "Christ might be able to approve her life."

One day in looking through some old boxes she came upon her first and only attempt at authorship. With smiling eyes she took up the manuscript over which she had once seen visions and dreamed dreams. Slowly and critically she read it through, and then with a little sigh she deliberately dropped it into the fire. Long months of familiarity with the best works of the world's best writers had cultivated her mind, and now she was able to criticise truthfully her own work. She saw how unfinished it was in style, how crude in language, how common-place in every thought. She watched her manuscript burn until a handful of gray ashes was all that remained of it, and then she took up Mr. Truman's old letter. She smiled a little as she read it.

"Mr. Truman was more merciful to me, than—if our places had been reversed—I would have been to him," she acknowledged to Miss Clark, who was sewing near her.

"I suppose Mr. Truman had learned not to judge of the quality of October's fruit from the May time's blossoms," Miss Clark answered wisely. "Honor," she asked in a moment, while she dropped her work and looked search-

ingly at the young girl, "could you write any better now, after all you have read and studied?"

Honor laughed gayly. "If I couldn't," she said, "I am like the chickens good Mrs. Poyser complains of in Adam Bede. "I ought to go back an' be hatched over."

"Then why don't you do it?" Miss Clark asked seriously.

"Do what?"

"Try your hand at writing again. Because you failed once it doesn't follow that you must always fail, does it?"

"No," Honor said thoughtfully, "but, Miss Clark, why should I try now? When I wrote that little essay I wanted money, I have no need to write for money now, you know."

"Very true," Miss Clark agreed, "but still if the good Lord has given you talent, I suppose you ought to use it for him; don't you?"

"I don't know," Honor said in a doubtful voice; "I am not as sure now, as I was three years ago, that I have a talent for writing; and if I have it is a very small talent, Miss Clark—it is hardly worth trying to use."

"Stop," Miss Clark said firmly. "Honor, that army is quite large enough without your joining it."

"What army?" Honor asked in surprise.

"Why the army of the one-talented, who

have nothing to show of their Lord's gifts to them, except the napkins in which they have folded them."

Honor sat back in her chair and looked thoughtfully into the fire. "If I knew of any good reason for writing, why then—perhaps—I would try," she said musingly.

"Reason?" Miss Clark echoed, "reason? Honor Montgomery, just look around you; just see how many bad books there are in the world, to begin with; and just see how many young people, how many half grown boys and girls are reading those bad books. And then, just think again how many souls have gone to heaven through the reading of some good book that made religion beautiful and Jesus real and dear; and then tell me if you don't see reason enough why if you can write you ought to write. You ain't no call to weigh your talent; you are just called upon to use it; and when you have done that you can leave your work in the Lord's hands. He will take care of it."

Honor did not answer. Miss Clark's suggestion was at once pleasant and distasteful. It was pleasant to think of giving expression to the vague thoughts that often floated dreamily through her mind; but she did not desire the real hard work that she well knew no earnest writer could escape; and then she did not

want publicity. She shrank from the thought of seeing her work reviewed, and her name in print. But she could not forget the picture Miss Clark had shown her of the great army of one-talented people, with their unused gifts hidden safely in folded napkins; and at last—as she had learned to do about all the interests of her daily life—she carried the question that was troubling her in prayer to her heavenly Father. Should she try to write? could she do good with her pen? would God accept her efforts?

Was it in answer to her prayer that, as she rose from her knees, these words seemed whispered to her; "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water... he shall in no wise lose his reward."

Honor hesitated no longer. She had abundant leisure, a large library, a memory rich with the choice thoughts of true thinkers, an inventive imagination, and a cultivated mind. It was no effort for her to write, and from her pen bright thoughts dropped as easily as the rare gems fell from the lips of the good little girl in the old fairy story.

It was on her twenty-first birthday that she began her task; it was in the winter, when she had few interruptions, and in three months her work—a story for children—was finished. Honor had learned much since she wrote her little es-

say, and she now knew that not even a distinguished name can give success to a poor book. Appealing to no one for assistance, she sent her manuscript to a well-known publisher with simply her name and address enclosed. Some weeks went by and then she received a letter from the publisher. Her story was accepted and would soon be published.

Authors are apt to become deeply interested in the fate of their brain-children; and Honor could not help indulging bright hopes for her little book. She had stipulated that her name should not be published, and for herself she did not desire fame; but for her work she did crave approval and popularity. But the little book was published without any flourish of trumpets; it was kindly noticed by a few religious papers, and then it apparently dropped into the "Limbo" where so many books by unknown authors rest; and months glided by and Honor heard nothing more of it.

It was a keen disappointment to the girl. "I might have known it would be a failure," she said regretfully to Miss Clark.

Miss Clark was feeding her canary bird. "Things ain't always what they seem," she said sensibly. "The seed isn't lost that this bird eats; and if you have dropped one good thought into one young heart you ought to be satisfied

with your seed sowing, you can wait for your flowers and fruit; you'll get them in the hereafter."

Honor felt the truth of Miss Clark's words, but the setting of a hope is like the setting of the sun,—our lives are always darkened by it, and it was well for the disappointed girl that just at that time her thoughts were effectually diverted from her book by a letter from Mrs. Pennock. She had returned to Pennock Manor, and reorganized her home there, and now she wrote asking for a long visit from Honor.

Janet was with her, she wrote, and also Mr. Royalston, who had but just returned from his African excursion. If Honor would come, their little family would be complete, and they would take the old life up where they laid it down. Would Honor come?

There could be but one answer to that kind invitation, and one lovely summer day, five years after the August night when as a friendless girl she first arrived there, Honor returned to Pennock Manor.

"Let me look at you," Mrs. Pennock said fondly, when Honor came to her in the library—where, too great an invalid to endure much exertion—she sat in her reclining chair.

Silently Honor removed her hat and stood before her. Mrs. Pennock studied her face for a moment, and then smiled well-satisfied. Her prediction was verified. The pretty, undisciplined girl had grown into a beautiful woman. "The world has not spoiled you, my little lassie," she said tenderly. And then, taught by her own rich experience, she whispered, "Nor can it ever spoil one who is truly the Lord's child."

Honor's first days at Pennock Manor were very delightful ones. With Mr. Royalston she found it easy to take up the old life: his friendship seemed as earnest as of old, and his interest as sincere and helpful. Honor trusted him fully; but Janet puzzled her a little. She treated Honor from their first meeting as if she were an intimate and even confidential friend. Wise in this world's wisdom she valued people more for what they possessed than for what they really were; and to her, Honor Montgomery, as the heiress of a rich old family, was far worthier of notice than she had been when as a poor and unknown girl in a lowly station, an earnest desire to do right had been her only attraction. There was a little ache in Honor's heart when she fully understood Janet's worldliness and insincerity; but there was no bitterness in either her thoughts or words. She wished Janet well, she remembered her in her prayers, and slowly but surely the influence

she unconsciously exerted—like light on a plant long kept in the dark—told on Janet, and all that was good in her nature began, at last, to grow.

Swiftly—as pleasant days unfortunately are very apt to do—the days of Honor's visit passed by. "I must go home soon," she said regretfully to Mrs. Pennock one lovely October morning.

Mr. Royalston caught her words. "Then we must 'gather the rosebuds while we may,'" he said brightly. "Miss Honor, do you know what I propose we should do to-day?"

"You could not easily propose anything unpleasant on such a pleasant day; but my mind-reading powers refuse to give me further insight into your thoughts," Honor answered.

"What would you and Janet say to a ride to Maspeth? Would that be in harmony with the day and your mood?"

"It will suit me," Janet said; "it is just the day for sketching, and there is a view of Maspeth in my sketch-book now that I shall be very glad to complete."

"It will suit me," Honor said, "it will seem as if we were doing, what I have often wished to do; returning to a day long past and living it over."

"We ought to have Ethel here to make this

day a perfect counterpart of that old one,"
Janet observed.

- "I had almost forgotten Miss Ethel," Mr. Royalston said, "where is she?"
- "Married and living in California," Janet answered.
- "My old china will have to do without her admiration to-day, then," Mr. Royalston said smilingly; "but Janet, if you and Miss Honor will prepare a lunch—and remember the oysters and coffee—I will do my best to make this day a perfect repetition of the one we spent at Maspeth four years ago."

They had a pleasant drive to Maspeth, and a merry lunch in the old kitchen; the fire in the old fireplace smoked and blazed as it had done on that gone-by autumn day that Honor so well remembered, and even the old china came out from its hiding-place to grace the occasion.

The afternoon sunshine was warm and bright when their lunch, with all its pleasant accompaniments of work and fun, was over; and then, while Janet went off to her sketching, Mr. Royalston and Honor lingered in the old-fashioned porch to watch the exquisite beauty of the dreamy mid-October landscape.

Presently from his study of nature's face, Mr. Royalston's eyes turned to Honor's. "Miss Honor," he said, "you haven't told me

yet what you have been doing with yourself through all these years—since we were here last."

- "I have been studying, for one thing," Honor answered.
- "I don't need to be told that," he said smilingly; "when the mind is full, the face and words are sure to reveal it. But what else have you done, Miss Honor?"
 - "Oh, various things."
- "That is a true woman's answer, indefinite and tantalizing," Mr. Royalston said playfully. "Now indulge me, please; tell me, at least, the chief of those various things."

Honor did not smile; her face was a bright reflection of the red-leaf tree that was waving over her head. "I have written a book," she said in a humble voice.

Mr. Royalston started a little; he had not expected that answer; but he only said: "Did you find it a pleasant work, Miss Honor? are you satisfied with its result?"

Honor did not look at him. She sat on the door step, and while she spoke, she pitilessly crumpled a bright maple leaf that had dropped into her lap; "I enjoyed the work while I was doing it," she said slowly. "I thought I ought to do it; I hoped it would do a little good; but—"

"But what?" Mr. Royalston asked kindly.

"It was a perfect failure," she confessed.

"It had no more life in it, than if it had been written in a dead language."

"Are you sure you are a competent judge? What was its name?"

"In June Days."

Mr. Royalston's face had been full of interest, but now it denoted great surprise. "In June Days," he repeated. "Why, Miss Honor, I picked up that little book one day when I was visiting a friend in the city, and its sweetness, truth, simplicity, and brightness, pleased me so much that, though it was a child's book, I read it all and enjoyed it thoroughly. And you think it a failure, do you? Well, you and I disagree; that is all."

Honor's face was a study; a tremulous smile curved her lips, but tears were in her eyes. "I am glad you can say that," she said gratefully, "it makes me very glad to know you like it. But"— and Mr. Royalston's quick ear detected the pain in her voice—"I am sure the public does not agree with you. I know I have failed."

"Have you had any report from your publisher? Is it a year yet since the book was published?"

"No," Honor answered to both questions.

Mr. Royalston laughed. "I am afraid you have a genius for seeing shadows as well as for writing books," he said playfully. "Wait until you hear from the publisher, before you believe your book dropped into the river of Lethe. My faith is great that you will yet find yourself your most merciless critic. But, Miss Honor, suppose your book is a failure. What follows?"

"Why, nothing," Honor said soberly.

"Do you think you are feeling quite right about it?" Mr. Royalston asked gently. "You said you wanted your book to do good; well, after you have written it, and done what you could, can you not leave it in God's hands? Even if it seems to you a failure it may not be one in God's sight. I think you need a little scolding, Miss Honor. Do you remember an evening long ago when I quoted Edwin Arnold's poem to you?"

Honor's color and smile both brightened. "I have never forgotten it," she said.

"That speaks well for my ability to scold," Mr. Royalston said with playful gravity, "and now, Miss Honor, as I think this occasion calls for similar heroic treatment, you may, if you please, listen to this." And with smiling eyes but an earnest voice, in the dreamy light of that golden day, he repeated:

"'Are deeds so great in the dreaming, so small in the doing found?

And all life's earnest endeavors, only with failure crowned? You look to the sky at evening, and out of the depths of blue,

A little star, you call it, is glimmering faintly through; Little? He sees, who looks from his throne, in the highest place,

A great world, circling grandly the limitless realms of space.

So with your life's deep purpose set in his mighty plan, Out of the dark you see it looking with human scan; Little and weak you call it—He, from his throne may see Issues that move on grandly into eternity.

Sow the good seed, and already the harvest may be won; That deed is great in the doing that God calls good when done;

'Tis as great perhaps to be noble, as noble things to do, And all the world is better, when one heart grows more true.

Let us be strong in the doing, for that is ours alone, The meaning and end are His, and he will care for his own, And if it seems to us little, remember that from afar, He looks into a world, where we but glance at a star."

The low recitation ceased, and for a little while no sound broke the peaceful silence of the hour; but soon with a face that was radiant with new hope and faith, Honor looked up at Mr. Royalston.

"Thank you," she said gratefully, "you have helped me now, just as you helped me long ago."

He did not answer until some minutes had passed, and then in a voice that had lost a little

of its usual quiet he said; "Ought not help to be a reflex good, Miss Honor? Should not the hand that gives a blessing carry one away?"

"It would make life very beautiful if that might always be," she said simply, while she looked up at him with a thoughtful smile.

He did not return her smile; he had left his seat, and now he came to her side. "Miss Honor," he said, "you say that I have helped you. You do not know—and I cannot tell you—how much, through all these years, you have helped me. Your memory has been to me a blessing and a shield; but now I want—yourself. Will you come to me, and help me heavenward? as I will try to help you—my darling."

Very low and tender were those last words but Honor heard them. The flush in her face deepened, but the light in her eyes was glad and high.

"I think God means it to be so," she said with pure, sweet dignity.

So in the Father's name she took the love that crowned her womanhood, and in the strength the Father gives she went onward to meet the life awaiting her—to be the sharer in many noble tasks, the comforter in many trials, the joy and the inspiration of many hearts.

THE END.

